Ice-cream with gherkins!

The weird snacks loved by top chefs



→ G2

The long read The strange survival of Guinness World Records

→ Journal



The Guardian

Thursday
25 May 2023
£2.80
From £2.03 for subscribers

Newspaper of the year

Clamour for PM to scrap Johnson's honours list

New Partygate claims pile pressure on Sunak to halt peerage rewards

Rowena Mason
Aubrey Allegretti

Rishi Sunak is facing calls to delay or cancel Boris Johnson's resignation honours list rewarding dozens of his allies after the former prime minister was reported to police over fresh Partygate allegations.

Labour and the Liberal Democrats said Sunak should pull the list of about 50 names, which is thought to be nearing approval and could be published within two weeks.

Some Conservatives are privately baffled as to why Sunak would be willing to go ahead with the list. It is expected to cause the prime minister a headache because it would hand peerages to three MPs - Nadine Dorries, Alok Sharma and Nigel Adams - and trigger potentially difficult byelections.

The prospect of more honours for Johnson's allies will now be even more controversial after the Cabinet Office passed his pandemic diaries to two police forces over concerns about more potential rule-breaches during Covid.

The documents outlining about a dozen events at both the prime minister's grace-and-favour mansion, Chequers, and 10 Downing Street, between June 2020 and May 2021, were provided by Johnson to his government-appointed lawyers. They raised the issue with the Cabinet Office, which paid for the lawyers, and officials there decided that under the civil service code, they should refer the matter to the police.

Johnson has severed ties with government lawyers supporting him during the Covid inquiry. Allies said he had "lost faith" in the system. His critics said Sunak and Johnson should abandon plans for a resignation honours list, with a string of reports about names submitted including party donors, aides and at one point even included a proposed knighthood for his father, Stanley Johnson.

Angela Rayner, Labour deputy leader and shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, said it was impossible for the list 2 →



Tina Turner 1939-2023

'She paved the way for so many women in rock'

PHOTOGRAPH: PHIL DENT/REDFERNS

Laura Snapes

Tina Turner, the pioneering rock'n'roll star who became a pop behemoth in the 1980s, has died aged 83 after a long illness.

She had suffered ill health in recent years, being diagnosed with intestinal cancer in 2016 and having a kidney transplant in 2017.

Her publicist, Bernard Doherty, said: "Tina Turner, the 'queen of rock'n'roll has died peacefully today at the age of 83 after a long illness in her home in Küsnacht near Zurich, Switzerland. With her, the world loses a music legend and a role model."

Turner affirmed and amplified Black women's formative stake in rock'n'roll, defining that era of music to the extent that Mick Jagger admitted to taking inspiration from her high-kicking, energetic live performances for his stage persona.

After two decades of working with her abusive husband, Ike Turner, she struck out alone and - after a few false starts - became one of the defining pop icons of the 1980s with the album Private Dancer.

Her life was chronicled in three memoirs, a biopic, a jukebox musical, and in 2021, the acclaimed documentary film, Tina. Paying tribute last night, Jagger, who duetted with Turner during Live Aid in 1985, said: "I'm so saddened by the passing of my wonderful friend Tina Turner. She was inspiring, warm, funny and generous. She helped me so much when I was young and I will never forget her."

Commenting on Instagram, the model Naomi Campbell said: "Rest in Peace & Power THE QUEEN, LEGEND, ICON. 10 →

Bank expected to raise rates above 5% this year

Richard Partington
Economics correspondent

Borrowers were warned yesterday to brace themselves for Bank of England interest rates above 5% before the end of the year after an unrelenting increase in the cost of food meant UK inflation dropped by less than expected last month.

Raising the prospect of additional financial pain for millions of borrowers and mortgage holders across Britain, economists warned the UK economy was facing stubbornly high levels of inflation that would draw an almost 12 →

VISIT…

LANZAROTE Caliente.com

Inside 25/05/23
Four sections every day

News and Sport

Cardiff riots
Police refuse to apologise after admitting pursuing boys before fatal crash
Page 9

Journal Outside G2
Opinions and ideas

"The right now wants to stop anyone coming to Britain at all
Aditya Chakrabortty
Page 1

G2 Centre pullout
Features and arts

Love and friendship
Many middle-aged men don't have close friends. How can they find them?
Page 4

Save up to 34% with a subscription to the Guardian and the Observer
Visit theguardian.com/paper-subs

Weather
Page 32

Quick crossword
Back of G2

Cartoon
Journal, page 4

Cryptic crossword
Back of Journal

Contact
For missing sections call **0800 839 100**.
For individual departments, call the Guardian switchboard: **020 3353 2000**.
For the Readers' editor (corrections & clarifications on specific editorial content), call **020 3353 4736** between 10am and 1pm UK time Monday to Friday excluding public holidays, or email **guardian.readers@theguardian.com**.
Letters for publication should be sent to **guardian.letters@theguardian.com** or the address on the letters page.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
The recycled paper content of UK newspapers in 2017 was 64.6%

Guardian News & Media, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU. 020-3353 2000. Fax 020-7837 2114. In Manchester: Centurion House, 129 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3WR. Telephone Sales: 020-7611 9000. The Guardian lists links to third-party websites, but does not endorse them or guarantee their authenticity or accuracy. Back issues from Historic Newspapers: 0870-165 1470 guardian.backissuenewspapers.co.uk. Published by Guardian News & Media, Kings Place, 90 York Way, London N1 9GU, and at Centurion House, 129 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3WR. Printed at Reach Watford Limited, St Albans Road, Watford, Herts WD24 7RG; Reach Oldham Limited, Hollinwood Avenue, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 8EP; Reach Saltire Ltd, 110 Fifty Pitches Place, Glasgow G51 4EA; and by Irish Times Print Facility, 4080 Kingswood Road, Citywest Business Campus, Dublin 24. No. 54,979, Thursday 25 May 2023. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office ISSN 0261-3077.

News

▼ *Boris Johnson joins his cabinet ministers for their official 2022 picture in the garden at No 10*
PHOTOGRAPH: NO 10 DOWNING STREET



New Partygate claims prompt calls for scrapping of Johnson honours list

Continued *from page 1*

to go ahead now Johnson is facing fresh allegations. "With the disgraced former prime minister now facing new allegations and under multiple investigations, there should be no question of Rishi Sunak approving honours for his cronies and cheerleaders. The prime minister should refuse to do Boris Johnson's bidding and make it clear that he will reject these demands.

"His top priority should be tackling the cost of living crisis facing ordinary people, not handing out more rewards for 13 years of Tory failure."

The Liberal Democrat chief whip, Wendy Chamberlain, said: "The days of exiting prime ministers nominating peers should be left in the past, particularly when they leave under a cloud of scandal like Boris Johnson. At the very least, Rishi Sunak must step in and delay this list while Johnson is under police investigation."

Chris Bryant, the chair of the House of Commons standards committee, also said the idea of a resignation honours list was "completely inappropriate" while the former prime minister was facing fresh allegations about rule-breaking.

Johnson is also still being investigated by the House of Commons privileges committee over whether he misled parliament by providing reassurances that all Covid rules and guidelines were followed in No 10.

One Conservative MP said it "does not make sense" for Sunak to let Johnson give peerages to Dorries, Sharma and Adams because it was going to cause him so much trouble and would be "a nightmare" for party headquarters to have to spend time and money on byelections. However, others said the furore around Johnson was having little cut-through this time because he was no longer relevant.

Tobias Ellwood, a Conservative MP and previous critic of Johnson, said: "I don't think it's gaining traction because there is momentum behind Rishi Sunak as we enter a calm and measured period of British politics after the turbulence of the last couple of years. It is being placed in perspective. There is some noise but the absolute majority of MPs are focused on getting back to what we do well and supporting statecraft in No 10."

> *'The prime minister should refuse Boris Johnson's bidding'*
>
> **Angela Rayner**
> *Labour*

The party has embarked on a round of furious fundraising in recent months, with Mohamed Mansour, a billionaire former minister in Egypt's Mubarak government and a senior treasurer to the Tories, this week handing over £5m towards its election efforts - its biggest one-off donation for more than 20 years. Many former treasurers of the Conservatives have subsequently been given honours but this tends to happen after they leave office. His spokesman did not reply to a request for comment on whether he was being lined up for a peerage but No 10 said it was not the case.

Downing Street sources have previously suggested Sunak thinks it fair for Johnson to get his own list. Liz Truss, who was prime minister for a matter of weeks, is also to get one after Johnson's has been settled.

Earlier yesterday, Downing Street denied Boris Johnson was the victim of a politically motivated stitch-up after his allies reacted with fury to news of the latest police involvement in Partygate allegations.

No 10 stressed that Sunak had no involvement in the decision to hand over Johnson's pandemic diaries, saying they had "not seen the information or material in question", adding that ministers had "no involvement … and were made aware after the police had been contacted".

Johnson said he was currently "unrepresented" in the Covid inquiry and in the process of instructing new solicitors. While he is confident taxpayers will continue picking up the bill for his new team, he admitted in a letter to the Covid inquiry published on Monday the Cabinet Office had yet to "agree funding and other practical arrangements".

However, the decision to engage his own lawyers has sparked concerns the bill for taxpayers will be significantly higher. Some Tory MPs suggested his decision to shun support from the government legal department meant he should face a cap on the cost incurred by instructing a new solicitor's firm.

Covid inquiry threatens legal action over notes and messages

Pippa Crerar
Robert Booth

The official public inquiry into the government's handling of Covid has threatened the Cabinet Office with criminal sanctions over its refusal to share unredacted versions of Boris Johnson's WhatsApp messages and diaries during the crisis.

The inquiry issued a legal notice requesting Johnson's unredacted WhatsApp communications, his official diaries between January 2020 and February 2022, together with 24 notebooks, revealing for the first time the scale of notes taken by the former prime minister while in office.

These included exchanges and group chats between senior government ministers, senior civil servants and their advisers during the Covid crisis, including the chief medical officer for England, Sir Chris Whitty, the then chief scientific adviser, Sir Patrick Vallance, and the former NHS chief Simon Stevens.

They also include their messages with former No 10 adviser Dominic Cummings and cabinet ministers at the time including Rishi Sunak, Liz Truss and the then deputy prime minister, Dominic Raab, the then health secretary, Matt Hancock, and the cabinet secretary, Simon Case.

However, after receiving the legal order on 28 April this year, the Cabinet Office refused the request, which had been made under section 21 of the Inquiries Act 2005, two weeks later, contending it was unlawful, according to inquiry documents.

Lady Hallett, the chair of the Covid inquiry, has now dismissed the Cabinet Office's response, saying she believed the initial order was within the law. Failure to comply without reasonable excuse would be a criminal offence, punishable with a fine of up to £1,000 or imprisonment for a maximum of 51 weeks.

Hallett, a former court of appeal judge, said she wanted to see messages even if it was not immediately obvious they were relevant to the inquiry, as they could show whether ministers had dealt with pandemic issues inadequately because their attention had been elsewhere.

She also highlighted "important" areas that the Cabinet Office had initially decided were "unambiguously irrelevant" to the inquiry, but on which she had recently received unredacted material. These included discussions between the former prime ministers and aides about the Metropolitan police's enforcement of Covid regulations following the murder of Sarah Everard.

Downing Street insisted the government was supplying "all relevant material" to the inquiry and had already provided more than 55,000 documents, 24 personal witness statements and eight corporate statements. It believed it had no duty to disclose "unambiguously irrelevant" material.

The prime minister's official spokesperson said: "We established the inquiry to ensure the actions of the state during the pandemic are examined as rigorously and candidly as possible to ensure we learn the right lessons for the future."

Rivka Gottlieb, a spokesperson for Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice UK, said: "This inquiry needs to get to the facts if it is to learn lessons to help save lives in the next pandemic. It's outrageous that they think they can dictate to an independent inquiry which of Boris Johnson's WhatsApp messages they can see.

"With the revelations that have come out about him breaking lockdown rules, you really do fear the worst about what they're hiding."



MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP/GETTY

'Brain machine' helps paralysed man walk using wireless signals

Ian Sample
Science editor

A man who was paralysed in a cycling accident in 2011 has been able to stand and walk with an aid after doctors implanted a device that reads his brain waves and sends instructions to the spine to move the right muscles.

Gert-Jan Oskam, 40, was told he would never walk again after breaking his neck in a traffic accident in China, but has climbed stairs and walked for more than 100 metres at a time since having the operation.

"A few months ago, I was able, for the first time after 10 years, to stand up and have a beer with my friends," said Oskam, who is from the Netherlands. "That was pretty cool. I want to use it in my daily life."

The "digital bridge" is the latest from a team of neuroscientists in Switzerland who have a longstanding programme to develop brain-machine interfaces to overcome paralysis. They aim to use wireless signals to reconnect the brain with muscles that are rendered useless when spinal cord nerves are broken.

In a previous trial, Oskam tested a system that recreated the rhythmic steps of walking by sending signals from a computer to his spinal cord. While the device helped him take several steps at once, the movement was quite robotic and had to be triggered by a button or sensor.

For the latest update, Prof Jocelyne Bloch, a neurosurgeon at Lausanne University hospital, installed electrodes on Oskam's brain, which detect neural activity when he tries to move his legs. The readings are processed by an algorithm that turns them into pulses, which are sent to further electrodes in his spine. The pulses activate nerves in the spine, switching on muscles to produce the intended movement.

"What we've been able to do is re-establish communication between the brain and the region of the spinal cord that controls leg movement with a digital bridge," said Prof Grégoire Courtine at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne. He said the system could "capture the thoughts of Gert-Jan and translate those thoughts into stimulation of the spinal cord to re-establish voluntary leg movements".

The device does not produce swift, smooth strides, but Oskam said the implant, described in Nature, allowed for more natural movements than before, because standing up and walking were initiated and controlled by thinking about the actions. The signals stimulate muscles needed to flex the hip, knee and ankle.



'For the first time in 10 years I was able to stand up and have a beer with my friends. That was pretty cool'

Gert-Jan Oskam
Patient

▲ *Gert-Jan Oskam broke his neck in a cycling accident in 2011. A brain-machine implant has allowed him to take small steps with assistance, top*

The device also appears to boost rehabilitation. After more than 40 training sessions with the implant, Oskam, who did not sever all the nerves in his spine, regained some control over his legs, even when the device was turned off.

Courtine believes that reconnecting the brain and spine helps to regenerate spinal nerves, recovering some of the patient's lost control.

While the work is still at an early stage, the researchers hope that future, miniaturised devices will help stroke patients and paralysed people to walk, move their arms and hands, and control other functions, such as the bladder, which is often affected by spinal cord injuries.

Arm and hand movements may be more difficult, as they are more complex than walking.

With Oskam showing progress more than a decade after his accident, the team is confident that other patients with more recent injuries could fare better. With Oskam "it's more than 10 years after the spinal cord injury," Courtine said.

"Imagine when we apply the digital bridge a few weeks after spinal cord injury. The potential for recovery is tremendous."

Vase repatriated from Britain to Greece is 'modern forgery'

Dalya Alberge

Days after Greece announced the recovery of hundreds of antiquities from a disgraced British dealer, its ministry of culture faces the accusation that one of the artefacts, a vase of the early 5th-century BC, bears a decoration that is a "modern forgery" created in the 1990s.

Christos Tsirogiannis, an archaeologist based in Cambridge, expressed astonishment that the ministry had included the *olpe* – a vase for wine – among the objects coming home. He told the Guardian that adequate studies would have shown it had been dismissed in 1998 by the foremost expert, among many examples of forged decorations on ancient vases – in this case, with an added modern design of a satyr and a goat.

Tsirogiannis described the Greeks' research as "absolutely shameful" because, in the announcement last Friday, Lina Mendoni, the Greek culture minister and an archaeologist, said they had "worked systemically and methodically" on the collection.

She announced that sculptures and vessels were among 351 objects being repatriated after a 17-year negotiation with the liquidated company of the antiquities dealer Robin Symes. In 2005, Symes served a jail sentence for disregarding court orders over the sale of a £3m Egyptian statue, with the judge dismissing his explanation as "a calculated deception".

The olpe was listed by the Greek ministry as: "Attic red figure olpe with a decoration of a satyr carrying a large amphora. A goat appears in the background of the decoration. The decoration was made by the Six technique [one of the decorative techniques of ancient Greek vase painters]. Early 5th century BC."

But in 1998 the leading scholar Dietrich von Bothmer published his findings that its decoration was a "modern forgery". He wrote in the archaeology journal Minerva that its Six technique of added opaque colours on a black background had been employed "five or six years" earlier.



The satyr and goat decoration is said to be a 90s addition

Tsirogiannis said the ministry was apparently unaware of this. "It is absolutely shameful because it exposes the real level of research, although they had 17 years," he said.

A spokesperson for the Greek ministry of culture and sports said Mendoni could not comment "as we are expecting a new minister to take over after last Sunday's elections", adding. "In cases of recovery of illegally trafficked antiquities, further research is carried out when antiquities are back in Greek museums."

Ex-PM not victim of stitch-up, says No 10 over fresh Partygate claims



Aubrey Allegretti
Senior political correspondent

About a dozen previously undisclosed gatherings at Chequers and Downing Street allegedly held during the Covid pandemic have been referred to the police by civil servants, the Guardian has been told.

Further details of the new Partygate accusations emerged as Boris Johnson's allies launched a furious fightback, forcing Downing Street to deny he was the victim of a politically motivated stitch up.

Government sources said about 12 potentially illegal events formed the basis of a dossier handed over to two police forces last week. While it was initially thought they were held at the prime minister's grace-and-favour mansion, Chequers, in Buckinghamshire, insiders say they also took place in No 10.

They were said to include events that did not form part of the Met police investigation last year, or the Whitehall inquiry led by the then-senior civil servant Sue Gray.

After Johnson's allies made clear their fury, No 10 stressed Rishi Sunak had no involvement in the decision to hand over the former prime minister's pandemic diaries.

"We have not seen the information or material in question," said Sunak's official spokesperson yesterday, adding that ministers had "no involvement in this process and were only made aware after the police had been contacted".

Police were contacted on 16 May about the issue, according to the Cabinet Office. Thames Valley police said it had received a report about "potential breaches" of Covid rules on 18 May, while Scotland Yard said the bundle had been passed to it the following day.

Sunak found out the police had been informed at some point between 19 May and the facts becoming public on Monday, No 10 said, without offering a specific date.

Downing Street refused to say whether Johnson would lose the Conservative whip should he be charged with further lockdown breaches, with Sunak's press secretary saying No 10 would not respond to questions about the "hypothetical" scenario.

However, they were much more categorical that Sunak had not attended the events in contention at Chequers. Asked whether the-then chancellor had broken Covid rules there, the press secretary said: "No, definitely not." They also rejected suggestions Johnson was the victim of a politically motivated stitch up.

Earlier, Johnson's allies issued a dramatic warning to Sunak, saying they would meet yesterday to "consider options" about how to force the government to stop "witch-hunts".

They upped the ante on the already febrile Tory benches by calling the decision to hand over evidence of gatherings at Chequers the "final straw".

Johnson's supporters accused Cabinet Office ministers of having signed off the decision to pass on the diaries to police. This was denied by the justice secretary, Alex Chalk, and the Cabinet Office.

Chalk suggested officials would have been lampooned whether they had passed on the documents or chosen to withhold them, adding: "Whether it was the right judgment turns on what's in those documents."

A spokesperson for the Cabinet Office added: "Ministers played no role in deciding whether the information should be handed to the police."

Johnson had given the government legal department - instructed by the Cabinet Office - a number of documents as they prepared his defence for the official public inquiry into the pandemic.

However, when concerns were flagged to senior officials in the Cabinet Office, they felt obliged under the civil service code to refer the material to the police.

Johnson has threatened to sue the Cabinet Office in retaliation, according to the Daily Mail.

Johnson is still subject to an investigation by the privileges committee into whether he misled parliament. It can levy a sanction if it finds he did. A suspension from parliament could lead to a byelection.

The seven-member committee, with a Tory majority and Labour chair, met yesterday. Despite concerns about progressing with its inquiry given the prospect of another police investigation being launched, the committee was said to have received legal advice confirming they were safe to proceed.

They hope to deliver their report by the end of June, sources said.

> ***'Ministers had no involvement in this process and were only made aware after the police had been contacted'***
>
> **Prime minister's spokesperson**

Rule maker
Scandal that refuses to go away

What was the Partygate scandal?
Reports of parties at Downing Street during lockdown came to be one of the major events that led to Boris Johnson's downfall, and saw his popularity with Tory MPs and the public slide until he resigned as prime minister in September 2022.

Reports of unlawful gatherings in defiance of strict Covid laws first emerged in December 2020.

Initially, the prime minister denied any rules had been broken, but evidence began to mount.

As the stream of revelations brought Johnson's assurances into question, he was pressured into announcing an inquiry - initially conducted by the cabinet secretary, Simon Case, but later by another senior civil servant, Sue Gray.

A parallel Scotland Yard investigation lead to fixed-penalty notices being issued to 126 people including Johnson, his wife and the then chancellor, Rishi Sunak.

What happened next?
Johnson tried to struggle on as prime minister, but other sleaze scandals engulfed his premiership, and he was effectively forced out by en masse cabinet resignations.

Once the civil service and police inquiries had been completed, attention turned to whether Johnson had been in contempt of parliament - a cardinal sin for any MP, let alone a prime minister.

The seven MPs on the privileges committee began their investigation last summer, sifting through evidence to establish what Johnson knew about the parties.

Though the government initially withheld much of the information, it was forced to hand it over, and Johnson appeared before the committee in March this year. Having sworn on the King James Bible, Johnson said that "hand on heart" he had not lied to the Commons, but acknowledged of social distancing guidance: "I'm not going to pretend that it was enforced rigidly."

What defence has Johnson offered?
Throughout the pandemic, key workers were allowed to go into the office. Johnson said events during lockdown he attended were "essential", including one where he was pictured raising a glass at a leaving do.

What has happened now?
Following the revelation that police are looking into potential law-breaking at Chequers, Johnson has decided to change his legal representation. The government-appointed lawyers shared details about possible social gatherings at the prime minister's country residence with Cabinet Office officials, who decided they had to refer the matter to the police.

What could come next?
Johnson is still a sitting Conservative MP. If he is found to have misled parliament, the amount of danger he is in rests upon the nature of the sanction that is imposed. A suspension of 10 days or more could result in him facing a byelection.
Aubrey Allegretti and Peter Walker



▼ *Boris Johnson said he was cutting ties with the government legal team after being reported to the police*
PHOTOGRAPH: BLOOMBERG/GETTY

Covid inquiry
Johnson seeks new lawyers amid distrust

Aubrey Allegretti

Boris Johnson has severed ties with government lawyers supporting him during the Covid inquiry, with allies saying he had "lost faith" in the system after he was reported to police over fresh Partygate allegations.

The former prime minister said he was "unrepresented" and in the process of instructing new solicitors.

While Johnson is confident taxpayers will continue picking up the bill for his new legal team, he admitted in a letter to the Covid inquiry published on Monday that the Cabinet Office had yet to "agree funding and other practical arrangements".

"I have no control over the timing of that process," he added.

Johnson's decision to stop relying on support from the government legal department shows the further erosion of relations between him and Whitehall. His allies have criticised the Cabinet Office for passing his pandemic diaries to two police forces over concerns about more potential rule-breaches during Covid.

The documents outlining visits by friends to Chequers between June 2020 and May 2021 were provided by Johnson to his government-appointed lawyers. But because the client was the Cabinet Office, it also received them.

Officials then decided that under the civil service code, they should refer the matter to the police.

The Covid inquiry is requesting further documents, including WhatsApp messages and 24 notebooks. The inquiry's chair, Lady Heather Hallett, dismissed an attempt by the Cabinet Office to block having to hand over everything in full.

Johnson had sought to head off publication of a letter by the inquiry team, which confirmed Hallett's decision. He asked them to wait 48 hours "for me to obtain legal representation and receive legal advice on your ruling" or publish his letter to put his concerns on the record. Inquiry officials decided on the latter.

Johnson's allies believe it is in line with longstanding practice for him to carry on receiving public money to pay for his new legal team.



◀ *Ministers including Boris Johnson gather at Chequers for Theresa May's 2018 Brexit crunch summit*
PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES

Chilling in the Chilterns
How couple embraced grace-and-favour pile

Heather Stewart

When Chequers was gifted to the nation a century ago, the intent was to allow prime ministers two days' a week relaxation in the Chiltern hills, because, "the better the health of our rulers, the more sanely will they rule".

Boris Johnson is alleged to have taken the invitation to kick back more seriously than most, treating Chequers as both a bolthole, and a party pad. "It's part of the grandeur that he thinks is his due," said a former colleague.

Even after resigning, Johnson and his wife were reluctantly dissuaded from holding a lavish wedding bash in the grounds of the 16th century mansion, before handing back the keys.

They spent Christmas 2019, after Johnson's landslide election victory, at Number 10, where Mrs Johnson later oversaw a notoriously costly redesign.

But over time, they came to spend an increasing amount of time at the wood-panelled Buckinghamshire residence, which is decorated with paintings and antiques, and set in large, heavily-guarded grounds.

Formally owned by a trust, MPs and officials who have visited describe Chequers as comfortable, despite its size, with attentive staff always ready with a cup of coffee or a bite to eat.

"They treat you as important, which Boris would have liked," said one former visitor who knows Johnson well. "It's cosy, you're looked after, your every need is attended to." Prime ministers are free to entertain at the house – as long as they pick up the costs of food and drink.

After Johnson was hospitalised with Covid in April 2020, it was to Chequers that he returned to recuperate. It later emerged that even before that, Carrie Johnson – then his fiancée – had based herself at Chequers, with the prime minister commuting back and forth to Number 10 during the early days of the pandemic.

Explaining this arrangement after it was first reported almost two years later, Johnson's official spokesperson said, "at the time as you know, Mrs Johnson was heavily pregnant, in a vulnerable category, and advised to minimise social contacts.

So in line with clinical guidance and to minimise the risk to her, they were based at Chequers during that period, with the prime minister commuting to Downing Street to work".

It would have come as a surprise to many members of the public at the time that "commuting" – or moving their family to a safer place – was within the rules.

Rachel Johnson, the former prime minister's sister, displayed similar insouciance when she told LBC listeners on Tuesday, "as far as I am aware, all the rules were followed whenever I went to Chequers, which wasn't often enough". Presumably the officials who referred Johnson's diary entries to the police felt that was at least unclear.

"The whole family have a massive sense of entitlement," harrumphed one former cabinet minister.

Johnson's former adviser Dominic Cummings hinted in an interview with the website UnHerd last year that the Partygate investigation should have taken in goings-on at Chequers. Asked whether there were parties at Chequers during the pandemic, he replied, "so people say".

Johnson and his growing family reportedly felt so at home at the Buckinghamshire retreat by the autumn of 2020, that he planned to build a £150,000 treehouse in the grounds for his son Wilfred – an idea apparently vetoed on security grounds.

They appear not to have been so comfortable with Chequers' long-serving staff, however, with senior housekeeper Charlotte Vine departing in 2020, amid reports over a clash with Carrie Johnson – something Mrs Johnson's spokesperson denied.

It was over dinner at Chequers that the Johnsons wooed Allegra Stratton, whose appointment as the prime minister's press secretary precipitated the acrimonious departure of key advisers Dominic Cummings and Lee Cain.

Increasingly preoccupied with financial worries, it was also at Chequers that Johnson entertained financier Richard Sharp and his friend Sam Blyth – a distant relative of Johnson's – who went on to act as guarantor for an £800,000 loan.

All three have insisted money was not discussed; but it was Sharp's failure to disclose his role in introducing the pair that led to his recent resignation from the BBC chairmanship.

When Theresa May was prime minister, she tended to prefer her more modest constituency home in the Berkshire village of Sonning for weekend escapes.

Chequers was mainly used for welcoming foreign dignitaries – including Donald Trump – and for holding key meetings.

"In itself it's quite rarefied – not many people get to go, it's exclusive – so an invite feels like a bigger deal than it would be to go into the PM's office in the House of Commons, even though you're essentially doing the same thing," said May's former press secretary, Paul Harrison.

May summoned her warring cabinet there to a dramatic Brexit showdown in July 2018 (the "Chequers summit") that ultimately precipitated Johnson's resignation as foreign secretary – once Brexit secretary David Davis had jumped first.

Johnson then helped foment a vigorous "Chuck Chequers" campaign from the backbenches, that helped to cement his reputation with grassroots Tory members – and seal May's fate.

At Christmas 2021, Downing Street released pictures taken at Chequers of Johnson, by now married, with his wife, new baby Romy and Dilyn the dog, joining a Zoom call with NHS staff from a squishy blue sofa.

They could not have looked more at home; but after the Partygate revelations and the ham-fisted defence of disgraced MP Owen Paterson, the seeds of his departure from No 10 seven months later had already been sown.

Johnson certainly took full advantage of Chequers, whose donors, Arthur and Ruth Lee, meant it to act as a country estate for prime ministers in a new, democratic age when they might not necessarily possess their own.

Whether he ruled "more sanely," as a result of the time spent in the Chiltern hideaway, may perhaps be best left to history to judge.

▼ *The prime minister and his home secretary side by side in the House of Commons yesterday*
PHOTOGRAPH: JESSICA TAYLOR/UK PARLIAMENT



Sunak spares Braverman by not ordering investigation into speeding course claim

Kiran Stacey
Aubrey Allegretti

Suella Braverman will remain as home secretary, after Rishi Sunak decided not to order an investigation into whether she broke the ministerial code by requesting a one-to-one speed awareness course.

The prime minister and Braverman exchanged letters yesterday morning in which Braverman expressed regret for the way she had handled the situation, but Sunak said it did not need formal investigation by his ethics adviser, Sir Laurie Magnus.

The decision came after more than 72 hours of deliberations in Downing Street, after the prime minister held meetings with Braverman and Magnus.

In a three-page letter explaining the events in detail, Braverman said she had sought advice from senior civil servants about whether she should attend the course, having been caught speeding while she was attorney general in June 2022.

She admitted in the letter: "In hindsight, or if faced with a similar situation again, I would have chosen a different course of action."

She added: "I sought to explore whether bespoke arrangements were possible, given my personal circumstances as a security-protected minister. I recognise how some people have construed this as me seeking to avoid sanction – at no point was that the intention or outcome."

Braverman said she had planned to attend the course in person, but when she was made home secretary in September, she sought advice from civil servants on whether she should do so, given she now had close protection officers.



▲ *Keir Starmer at PMQs yesterday. Labour criticised the PM's decision and the 'cosy exchange of letters'*

She added that she did not want to do an online course for fear someone else on the course could record her while it was happening.

Her principal private secretary had raised the issue with officials in the permanent secretary's office at the Home Office, she said, who in turn had spoken to the propriety and ethics team in the Cabinet Office.

Her decision to involve senior civil servants raised questions over whether she had breached the ministerial code by asking them to intervene in her private matters. She insisted in her letter that the potential involvement of the close protection officers meant it did not qualify as a purely private matter.

The propriety and ethics team in the Cabinet Office advised, however, that this was not an issue for civil servants to take forward, and so she asked her special advisers to help instead.

"My [principal private secretary] also rightly pointed out that I needed to be mindful to ensure that I did not ask a company to change their rules due to my position, which neither I, nor to the best of my knowledge anyone acting on my behalf, ever sought to do," she added. In the end the home secretary decided to accept the speeding fine and points on her licence rather than attending a course either online or in person.

In a brief response, Sunak said he accepted her explanation, and believed the matter did not warrant a formal investigation.

The prime minister wrote: "[Magnus] has advised that on this occasion further investigation is not necessary and I have accepted that advice. On the basis of your letter and our discussion, my decision is that these matters do not amount to a breach of the ministerial code."

But he added: "As you have recognised, a better course of action could have been taken to avoid giving rise to the perception of impropriety."

Experts have criticised Braverman's action, with the former senior civil servant Sir Philip Rycroft calling it a "real lapse of judgment".

Labour criticised the decision, saying a "cosy exchange of letters" appeared to have replaced the "recognised process" for investigating ministerial conduct. "The whole point of having an independent adviser is so that these matters can be looked at thoroughly and these facts can be put in the public domain in a way that isn't subject to political spin," a party spokesman said.

Braverman sat beside Sunak at prime minister's questions in a show of unity yesterday.

The Labour leader, Keir Starmer, poked fun at her during questions about immigration and employment policies, claiming she had a problem "coping with points-based systems".

Migration Today's highly politicised figures will mask a complex reality

Peter Walker

Releases of official statistics can often be the focus of political scrutiny, but the latest annual figures for overall net migration to the UK, due this morning, are so eagerly anticipated that they have prompted two policy announcements already.

On Tuesday, Suella Braverman, the home secretary, rushed through a plan to try to reduce the number of people arriving via student visas by greatly limiting the scope for them to bring family members with them.

A day later, Keir Starmer used every one of his prime minister's questions allocation to lambast Rishi Sunak over the likely size of the statistics, and to unveil Labour ideas he argued would incentivise employers to train UK staff rather than bring workers from overseas.

Immigration has been a highly charged debate in UK politics, but with the end of free movement following Brexit, the Conservatives' hope was that the argument on formal migration would be largely settled, with debate focusing on people arriving via unofficial routes such as small boats.

Instead, the near-46,000 arrivals who crossed the Channel this way are set to be only a small fraction of the total for net migration, which some have forecast could get into the high hundreds of thousands.



▲ *The near-46,000 people who arrived by small boat are set to be a small fraction of the total*

The last available figures showed the number stood at 504,000 in the year to June 2022, compared with 173,000 in the 12 months to June 2021. Those released on Thursday will be for the calendar year 2022, and are likely to be higher still.

What is going on? The short answer is this is the result of both unexpected, one-off factors, and long-term choices.

In the first column comes one obvious bulge: the arrival of refugees from Ukraine and from Hong Kong. Similarly, Covid has skewed figures, with more shorter-term arrivals, such as students, coming after the pandemic, given their scarcity during 2020 and 2021.

But more significant is the effect of government policy - not least the fact it became notably easier for many non-EU nationals to come to the UK to work after Brexit, with restrictions on skills and minimum salaries lowered.

In the longer term, there has been an official willingness to rely on overseas staff to fill gaps in sectors facing shortages, notably health and social care, rather than tackle wage and working-condition issues that might make the roles more appealing to British staff.

And, at least until this week, there has been a tolerance for universities targeting new overseas markets for students, who pay high fees; yet postgraduates can be in their 30s with dependants.

As with all migration debates, officials describe it as a (generally) polite battle of wills between departments eager to fight their corner over economic boosts from migration - notably education, agriculture and the Treasury - and a Home Office led by Braverman, who has called for significant cuts in official migration.

Whatever today's final figure was, said Rob McNeil, the deputy director of Oxford University's Migration Observatory, it would be "in part because of geopolitical events, things like the invasion of Ukraine, the crackdown in Hong Kong and Covid: but there are also lots of policy choices involved".

He added: "All this doesn't mean we are necessarily at the spike of the peak yet. That's not to say that we aren't, it's just that we can't predict it. In the longer term, you might expect the figures to broadly return to the pre-Covid norms, but we can't say that with any certainty."

Postal voting Charity warns older people may give up over 'sledgehammer to crack a nut'

Peter Walker
Deputy political editor

Newly announced government rules to require identity checks for postal and proxy voting are likely to make it harder for older people to take part in elections, a leading charity has warned.

Age UK said the plans, announced quietly via a written statement on Tuesday evening, appeared to be "a sledgehammer to crack a nut", and said it was concerned that the proposals would not have proper parliamentary scrutiny.

Ministers had said they would introduce checks for so-called absentee votes following a parallel plan obliging people to show photo ID at polling stations, a scheme used on a mass scale for the first time outside Northern Ireland in local elections across England earlier this month.

Setting out details for the first time in the written statement, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities said people would need to provide a national insurance number or another form of identity when applying for a postal or proxy vote. This would normally be done via an online portal, officials said.

People will also have to renew applications for a postal vote every three years, rather than the current five. Another change will mean people can only cast proxy votes on behalf of a maximum of four people, including a maximum of two UK-based voters. Currently, there is no limit for casting proxy votes on behalf of family members.

The rules will apply to UK parliamentary elections, but not to local elections in Scotland or, apart from PCC elections, in Wales. The rules are being introduced as a statutory instrument, a type of secondary legislation very rarely subject to parliamentary debate and usually not voted on in the Commons.



▲ *People will be able to cast proxy votes for a maximum of four people, including two UK-based voters*

While an official Electoral Commission report into the effect of in-person voter ID has yet to be published, Age UK said there were plentiful witness accounts of older voters being turned away as they lacked the correct documents.

Caroline Abrahams, the charity's director, said: "There's a logic to bringing arrangements for proxy and postal voting into line with those for in-person voting, but this policy still strikes us as a sledgehammer to crack a nut, and one that we're really concerned will erect additional barriers to older people exercising their democratic right to vote. For this reason we cannot support it.

"We accept the need to ensure that our voting processes are secure and resistant to fraud, but this new policy, which we note is being introduced through regulations and therefore not subject to parliamentary scrutiny, seems disproportionate.

"Rather than strengthening our democracy our worry is that it will weaken it, if some older people with postal votes find it too hard to submit their ID, or to re-register every three years, and simply give up."

Sketch
John Crace



PMQs stuck in endless loop as Rish! refuses to accept challenges to his alternative reality

Remarkable, really. Call it the joys of cognitive dissonance. Listen to Rishi Sunak speak for more than a few seconds and you will get the impression you are living in some kind of nirvana. That the UK is some kind of blissed-out superstate. A land of plenty, where joy is unconstrained.

PMQs appears now to be on an endless loop in which everything comes back to the same point. Keir Starmer asks a straightforward question about a government policy he thinks isn't working so well, and Rish! just denies it. Worse than that, he gets really upset if his reality is challenged. Yesterday the Labour leader homed in on immigration before the release of the latest figures. A fair question, given the prime minister has three times stood on a manifesto to reduce net migration, only to see it increase year on year. You'd have thought even someone as out of touch as Sunak would have realised by now that something was wrong. Not that he would ever apologise. Men with Rish!'s sense of entitlement never say sorry.

> *You'd have thought even someone as out of touch as Sunak would realise something was wrong. Not that he would ever apologise*

Sunak has drunk deep on his own Kool-Aid. He believes he can fly. Touch the sky. Labour had got it all wrong. The fact that migration had gone up was a sure sign it was coming down. But just to be certain he would make life miserable for foreign students, a group of migrants most people actually want. Go figure.

And while he was about it, he wanted to put in a word for the International Monetary Fund. Normally he rubbishes its forecasts as they frequently indicate that the UK economy is tanking. But now he was falling over himself to boast the economy was expected to grow by 0.4%. A figure that will barely register on the consciousness of most sane people as it will be hard to tell the difference between that and flatlining.

After all, inflation remains stubbornly high, with food inflation running at nearly 20%. Even if inflation did fall, it wouldn't mean that the basics of food and heating would get any more affordable as prices aren't about to start falling. They will just become more unaffordable marginally less quickly.

But none of this registers with Sunak. Week after week he parrots that all is for the best. People should stop moaning and open their hearts to the generosity of the government. Rish! is a natural giver. He is paid a mere £160,000 as prime minister. OK, he may have several little earners on the side, but the little people would do well to remember that some of his investments had been badly hit. And have you heard him complain that the best part of a billion quid doesn't buy what it used to? No. He has suffered in silence, and would be obliged if the rest of us did too.

One MP not in the Commons was Boris Johnson. He seldom is. Too busy talking bullshit in Las Vegas. But he was uppermost in people's minds. Who could have guessed Johnson may have broken even more rules than we had thought? But what great karma that it was his refusal to pay for his own lawyers that led to him being grassed up. Johnson's outriders were protesting loudly. It was all a plot to stitch him up. The irony of their man being paid £250,000 for a half-hour off-the-cuff monologue while insisting he was being cancelled escaped them. They were out for blood, paranoid that Sunak was behind the latest allegations. Labour was a mere distraction. The real action was blue on blue.

Lineker accepts human rights award and issues plea for 'more empathy'

Angela Giuffrida
Rome

Gary Lineker said people needed to show "more compassion, empathy and kindness" towards refugees as the Match of the Day presenter collected an award in Rome yesterday.

Lineker was in the Italian capital to receive a "Sport and Human Rights" award from Amnesty International for "his strong commitment towards immigration and human rights issues", after his criticism in March of the language used by UK government ministers when discussing asylum policy.

The ex-England and Tottenham Hotspur striker has in turn come under fire from Tory MPs for accepting the award – including Craig Mackinlay, who described it as "another self-congratulatory fest of one woke group to another woke activist".

Lineker, 62, was temporarily suspended by the BBC over a controversial tweet in which he compared the language used to launch a government asylum seeker policy with that used in 1930s Germany.

He described the experience as "strange and surreal". "I'm still surprised now about what happened," Lineker said during the award ceremony at the Italian national press federation. "It was caused by one of our newspapers which put a headline that was disproportionate to what I actually tweeted.

"What I was trying to say was that I think we need to be careful with the language we use towards people who have to flee their countries because of persecution, because of war and possibly climate change, and I think we need to show them compassion, empathy and kindness."

In response to the backlash over the award from the Conservative MPs, Lineker said: "I am for freedom of speech – but in my experience of freedom of speech, particularly the people who campaign for freedom of speech, they're all for it until they disagree with what you're saying, and I think that's always important to remember."

Lineker received an award alongside Natali Shaheen, the former Palestine football captain who currently plays futsal in Sardinia. Shaheen wrote a book called *Un calcio ai pregiudizi* (A kick to prejudices), the proceeds for which she donated towards associations focused on the training of young female footballers in Palestine and Sardinia. Shaheen, who was the first Palestinian footballer to play at professional level in Europe, said sport, and especially football, had the power to "change many things, and many mentalities".


▼ *Gary Lineker and Natali Shaheen, a Palestinian footballer, who also received an award at the event in Rome yesterday* PHOTOGRAPH: AMNESTY

> ***'We're all human beings. People on those boats have had to flee under incredible difficulty'***
> **Gary Lineker**
> *On refugees*

Lineker, who is well remembered in Italy for his performance with England during the 1990 World Cup, also spoke about his experience hosting refugees. "It came about because whenever I tweeted pro-refugee tweets someone would say 'stick to football' or 'why don't you have these people in your house'," he said, adding that he hosted two refugees via a charity. "It was a hugely positive experience, not just for me but my four sons – they have an entitled life and are very fortunate, and I think it gave them a real perspective."

Lineker said: "Sometimes we forget that we're all the same, we're all human beings.

"In our country we talk about 'we've got to stop the boats'," he added. "But there are people on those boats who have had to flee under incredible difficulty."

Zvonimir Boban, the former Milan and Croatia midfielder, presented Lineker with his award. "The award has gone to the right person," Boban said. "Lineker has always defended freedom and he doesn't do it falsely. I have a lot of respect and esteem for him, even more so today."



Representative Example	Duration of Agreement	Upfront Cost	Monthly Device Payment	Credit Amount	Total Amount Payable	Interest Rate	Representative APR	Device Cash Price	Airtime Plan until March 2024	Airtime Plan April 2024 - March 2025	Airtime Plan April 2025 - March 2026
iPad 9th Gen 64GB	48 months	£20	£9.80	£470.06	£490.06	0%	0%	£490.06	£7.00	£7.00 + RPI announced in Feb 2024 = Price A	Price A + RPI announced in Feb 2025

***Each year your Airtime Plan will be increased by the Retail Price Index (RPI) rate of inflation announced in February plus 3.9%. If RPI is negative, we'll only apply the 3.9%. You'll see this increase on your April 2024 bill onwards. See o2.co.uk/prices.** £9.80 Device Plan for 48 months and £7 monthly rolling Airtime Plan. £20 upfront. £232 saving consists of £40.94 discount applied to the device plan (total cost of device was £531.00 now £490.06) and £192 saving achieved by £4 per month discount on the 1GB Airtime Plan for 48 months. Discount applies until you change tariff, leave or upgrade. Data allowances must be used within the months and cannot be carried over. Subject to availability. Ends 31st May 2023. **48 Months O2 Refresh custom plans:** Direct purchases only. Pay the cash price for your device or spread the cost over 3 to 48. Like new devices available for 3 to 36 months. The device cost will be the same whatever you choose. There may be an upfront cost. You need a monthly rolling Airtime Plan as long as you have a Device Plan. Pay off your Device Plan at any time and you can choose to keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade or leave. If your Airtime Plan ends for any reason you will need to pay your Device Plan in full. If you are in the first 24 months of your Device Plan and you cancel your Airtime Plan you will have to pay the remainder of your Device Plan in full. After 24 months you can keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade it, or end it without affecting your Device Plan. Get up to 6 months' Apple TV+ when you buy an eligible iOS device on a Plus Plan from O2 ("Qualifying Purchase"). Redeem directly with Apple via redemption code provided to you within 7 days of Qualifying Purchase. All participants must redeem by 9th November 2023. Redemption terms apply. O2 provides a 3-month subscription (a "Subscription Period"), depending on which available device or offer is chosen, added to any existing or new trial period of up to 3 months provided by Apple directly. You must set up Apple account and agree to Apple's terms of use. You'll be automatically enrolled on to a paid monthly subscription directly with Apple at the end of the relevant Subscription Period. You cannot benefit from more than one subscription period with O2. Tariff eligibility criteria applies which includes being a UK resident and 18+. No cash or alternatives. Lost redemption codes will not be replaced. Offer may be withdrawn or amended at any time. Internet access required. **For how to claim and full terms:** o2.co.uk/termsandconditions/rewards. UK Data Only. Devices subject to availability. 0% APR. Finance subject to status and credit checks. 18+. Direct Debit. Credit provided by Telefónica UK Ltd, SL1 4DX. Telefónica UK is authorised and regulated by the FCA for consumer credit and insurance. Terms apply, see o2.co.uk/terms



▼ *CCTV footage shows two riders on an e-bike followed by a police van before the fatal crash in Cardiff in which two boys died*

PHOTOGRAPHS: SCREENGRAB/THE GUARDIAN





Police refuse to apologise after saying van was following two boys who died

Steven Morris
Matthew Weaver

Police have refused to apologise after finally admitting that one of their vans was following two boys a minute before they were killed in a collision that sparked violent riots in Cardiff.

Almost two days after the deaths of Kyrees Sullivan, 16, and Harvey Evans, 15, South Wales police released a timeline of the moments leading up to the tragedy that revealed how close officers were to the crash.

Officers said for the first time that the same van that had been following the boys on an electric bike went to them after the crash, though it insisted no police vehicle was there when the pair were fatally injured.

The South Wales force refused to accept that families and the public had been deliberately misled by claims from their police and crime commissioner, Alun Michael, soon after the riot that it had been sparked by false rumours of a chase, and said no officers had been suspended or spoken to under caution.

The timeline was released after the Guardian published footage appearing to show the police van following the boys on an electric bike shortly before the tragedy and about 400 metres from where it happened.

A member of Harvey's family told the Guardian: "They originally told our family there was no police vehicle in the area at the time and they didn't get chased. It's all in the video. They were lying."

Soon after, at a press conference at police headquarters, Deputy Chief Constable Rachel Bacon set out what she said had been confirmed by witness accounts, analysing tracking data from force vehicles and studying CCTV.

She revealed that at just before 6.01pm on Monday the police van began following the bike from Frank Road in Ely. It did not activate blue lights or sirens. At 6.01 and 18 seconds it was at a roundabout, then travelled along Stanway Road before turning off on to Howell Road.

Relatives believe the van could not follow the boys up Stanway Road because it is blocked off with bollards. The boys are believed to have wiggled through the bollards before the crash happened. Police put the time of the collision at between 6.02pm and 17 seconds and 6.02pm and 41 seconds.

Bacon refused to say why the police had followed the boys as the investigation was being handled by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). Asked why police had not confirmed earlier that officers had been following the boys, she said: "We have done our best given the circumstances we have faced with the information we have had."

She refused to apologise but acknowledged community anger, saying: "I'm here today to talk to the communities of Ely to let them know that we absolutely understand their concerns, that we're listening to … their worries about the accuracy of what we've said." Asked about Michael's claims about false rumours, she said the picture had been "unclear" at the time.

An eyewitness, whose CCTV captured the police van in Frank Road, said she and their four-year-old niece had to jump out of the way of the bike and van. "You could see the boys were panicking and trying to get away from the police," she said. "The boys were petrified."

Yesterday, friends of the boys maintained a vigil at the spot where tributes had been left. Most poured scorn on the account given by police.

One woman, who did not give her name, said: "Young people are always targeted by police around here." She said the riots happened because police would not let family members approach the spot where the pair died.

Another said: "The feds are telling porky pies. They treat us differently because we live in Ely."

One message on a floral tribute read "Love you both like family" and recalled "the first time we played motorbikes".

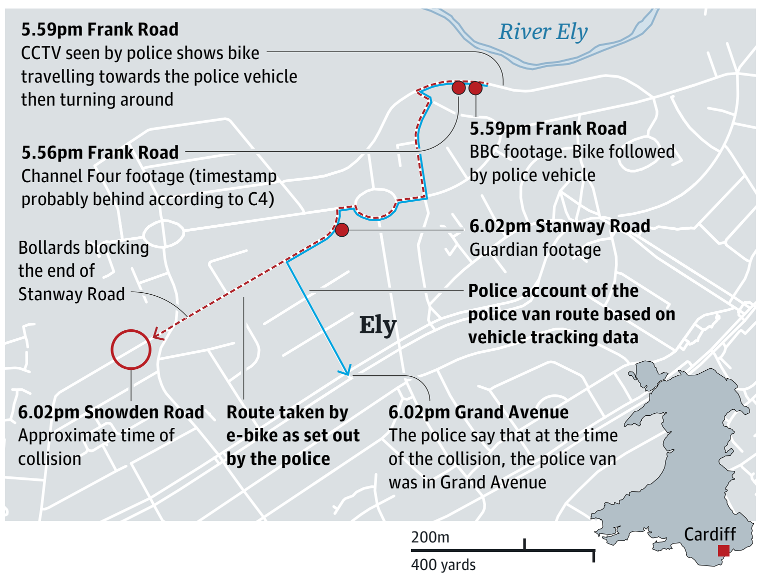
Harvey's godmother, Bridy Bool, said: "Two beautiful boys lost their lives. They were loved by so many people. They grew up together from when they were babies, they ate, slept, breathed together."

The families of the two boys released tributes to them. In a statement Harvey's mother said: "Our hearts are truly broken by the sudden death of Harvey, our much-loved son, grandson, brother, nephew, friend and boyfriend.

"He lived life to the full, he had a big heart and deep down he truly cared. He was a best friend to Kyrees, and our thoughts and prayers are with his family also. As Harvey's mum I want to remember our son as the fun and loving son."

Kyrees' family said: "Kyrees was a loving, caring handsome young man … Him and Harvey along with Niall were best friends since they were young and went everywhere together, they both had so many friends and were very well liked doing many things together, having fun and laughs. They were loved by not only their families but by their community as well."

Timeline of video footage







▶ *Harvey Evans (left), 15, and Kyrees Sullivan, 16, died in a crash a minute after being followed by a police van*

PHOTOGRAPH: PA WIRE

Inside
A week of GB News
Bashing the woke, the global elite and the WHO. But why?
Page 18 →









Tina Turner, 'the queen of rock and soul', dies aged 83

Continued *from page 1*

There will never be another." The American singer Gloria Gaynor hailed Turner as an "iconic legend who paved the way for so many women in rock music, black and white".

Elton John said Turner was a "total legend on record and on stage".

"We have lost one of the word's most exciting and electric performers," he wrote. Angela Bassett, who starred as Turner in the 1993 film What's Love Got To Do With It and received a best actress Oscar nomination for the role, said: "I am honoured to have known Tina Turner. I am humbled to have helped show her to the world."

Actor Viola Davis wrote of the star: "Iconic. Beautiful. A survivor. Brilliance. Our first symbol of excellence and unbridled ownership of sexuality!! You were my childhood."

The Rolling Stones guitarist Ronnie Wood shared pictures of Turner online, writing: "God bless you Tina, the Queen Of Rock And Soul and a dear friend to our family."

Turner was born Anna Mae Bullock on 26 November 1939 and raised in Nutbush, Tennessee, where she recalled picking cotton with her family as a child. She sang in the tiny town's church choir, and as a teenager talked - or rather, sang - her way into Ike's band in St Louis: he had declined her request to join until he heard her seize the microphone during a Kings of Rhythm performance for a rendition of BB King's You Know I Love You.

After her vocal talents became apparent, Ike gave her the name Tina Turner - and trademarked it in case she left him and he wanted to replace her in his act. He quickly became abusive: when Turner tried to leave the group early on after getting a sense of his mercurial character, he hit her with a wooden shoe stretcher.

"My relationship with Ike was doomed the day he figured out I was going to be his moneymaker," Turner







▲ *Tina Turner with her dancers in Amsterdam, 1979. Top left, with Ike Turner on Ready Steady Go! in 1966 and, above left, with Beyoncé at the Grammys in 2008. Left, a 1969 portrait by Jack Robinson. Right, with Janis Joplin at Madison Square Garden in 1969*

PHOTOGRAPHS: ROB VERHORST/ REDFERNS, IVAN KEEMAN/REDFERNS, MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS, JACK ROBINSON, AMALIE R ROTHSCHILD

wrote in her 2018 biography, My Love Story. “He needed to control me, economically and psychologically, so I could never leave him.”

She made her recorded debut under her new name with the Ike and Tina Turner single A Fool in Love in July 1960, which broke the US Top 30 and started a run of respectable chart success. But it was their live performances that made them a sensation. Ike toured the Ike & Tina Turner Revue aggressively on the Chitlin’ Circuit – including in front of desegregated audiences, such was their commercial power.

In the second half of the 60s, the duo were courted by many of rock’s biggest names. Phil Spector produced the 1966 single River Deep – Mountain High; they supported the Rolling Stones in the UK and later the US. They were a chart-making, Grammy-winning force in the 1970s – a run that came to an end when Turner left Ike, who had been consistently violent and unfaithful, in 1976.

In the divorce, finalised in 1978, Turner came away with just two cars and the rights to her stage name. “Ike fought a little bit because he knew what I would do with it,” she said in the documentary Tina.

Turner, who had already released two solo records, continued pursuing a solo career, but it would take her fifth album, 1984’s Private Dancer, for her to supplant the old image of the shimmying rock’n’roller with one of a powerful, mullet-sporting, leather-clad pop icon. In the documentary Tina, she described Private Dancer as her debut. “I don’t consider it a comeback,” she said. “Tina had never arrived.”

Turner credited Buddhism and particularly the practice of chanting with positively affecting her life in the 1980s. Outside music, she starred in Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome opposite Mel Gibson in 1985. She published her first memoir, the global bestseller I, Tina, in 1986, which was later adapted in to the 1993 film What’s Love Got to Do With It? In 1995, she sang the theme tune to the James Bond film GoldenEye.

Turner announced her retirement in 2000, a year after releasing her final solo album, Twenty Four Seven, though she would return to the stage in 2008, performing at the Grammy awards with Beyoncé, and for a final tour to mark 50 years of her career.

That was conclusively the end. “I was just tired of singing and making everybody happy,” she told the New York Times in 2019. “That’s all I’d ever done in my life.” Turner collaborated on the musical Tina with Phyllida Lloyd, which won Laurence Olivier and Tony awards for, respectively, its West End and Broadway runs.

Turner often said she did not relate to the “invincible” persona that others put on her. “I don’t necessarily want to be a ‘strong’ person,” she told the New York Times. “I had a terrible life. I just kept going. You just keep going, and you hope that something will come.”

Turner is survived by her second husband, the German music executive Erwin Bach. They married in July 2013 after 27 years together and lived in Switzerland. In 2013, Turner renounced her US citizenship to become a Swiss citizen.

Her first child, Craig Raymond Turner, died in July 2018. Last year, Turner said in the wake of her other son Ronnie’s death at the age of 62 that he had “left the world far too early”.

She is survived by two of Ike’s sons, Ike Turner Jr and Michael Turner, whom she adopted.

In 2020, Turner told the Guardian that despite having some serious health problems, the last 10 years of her life had embodied her ideal vision of happiness.

“True and lasting happiness comes from having an unshakeable, hopeful spirit that can shine, no matter what,” she said. “That’s what I’ve achieved, and it is my greatest wish to help others become truly happy as well.”

Simply the best
Life of a born performer

Had Annie Mae Bullock’s musical career come to an end 47 years ago, with the break-up of her professional partnership with, and famously horrendous marriage to, Ike Turner, she would still be deserving of a place in pop’s history books. However ghastly the abuse that went on in their personal lives, Ike And Tina Turner were an extraordinary musical partnership.

Their singles hit only intermittently during their 60s and 70s. Although the most successful became classics – River Deep Mountain High, Nutbush City Limits, a cover of Creedence Clearwater Revival’s Proud Mary that eclipsed the original and became the definitive reading of the song – they were never a consistent presence on the US or UK charts: that a single as good as 1974’s Sweet Rhode Island Red flopped as a follow-up to Nutbush City Limits seems baffling, but that’s how it was.

Their real reputation rested on their live show, honed by relentlessly touring the spit and sawdust venues of black America’s chitlin’ circuit.

You can get a sense of how electrifying, raw and urgent they were from the lo-fi live albums cannily recorded in the 60s, or better yet, the six tracks included on the expanded edition of The Rolling Stones’ album Get Yer Ya-Ya’s Out (the Turners were the support act on the tour the album captured; you wonder how The Stones dared follow them onstage).

Whatever his failings, Ike Turner was a great songwriter. But from the moment he hooked up with his wife-to-be, there was no doubting who the star of the show was.

Tina Turner was a born performer. Moreover she had a supremely potent voice: on their 1960 debut single, A Fool In Love, it sounds as if the microphone can barely cope with its visceral power.

You would have thought that might stand her in good stead as a solo artist, but after their separation, she struggled for years.

It wasn’t until she hooked up with producers the British Electric Foundation – better known as Sheffield synth artists Heaven 17 – for a fantastic 1982 cover of The Temptations’ Ball of Confusion that things started moving. It led to a new record deal, and to 1984’s Private Dancer, an album produced in part by the BEF’s Martyn Ware, that set her voice against a glossy commercial sound somewhere between rock, pop and soul.

It was filled with fantastic songs that Turner seemed to completely inhabit and made her a far bigger star. If the material she favoured thereafter tended towards the middle-of-the-road, the way she sang seldom did: Tina Turner had transformed her life, her career and her music’s sound, but something of the chitlin’ circuit’s grit never left her. Alexis Petridis

Warning of interest rates above 5% after inflation drops by less than forecast

Continued *from page 1*

guaranteed reaction from the central bank.

Yesterday's figures cast further doubt on Rishi Sunak's target to halve the rate of inflation before the end of the year and could put further pressure on the prime minister before the next election.

The energy regulator Ofgem is poised to announce a lower cap on energy bills today, with the average gas and electricity bill expected to fall from £2,500 a year under the government's energy price guarantee to just over £2,053. However, the figure remains almost double the level before Russia began restricting gas flows to Europe.

The Office for National Statistics reported that inflation, as measured by the consumer price index, fell to 8.7% in April, down from 10.1% in March, as it dipped below double figures for the first time since last summer. The rate peaked at 11.1% in October. However, the figure was higher than predictions made by Threadneedle Street two weeks ago, prompting a sharp sell-off on the London stock market yesterday and driving up UK government borrowing costs close to the level during Liz Truss's ill-fated premiership.

Financial markets moved to bet it was almost a certainty that the Bank would increase the base interest rate by a quarter-point from the current level of 4.5% when its policymakers next meet in June, with the prospect of borrowing costs reaching almost 5.5% before the end of the year.

Should rates hit that level, a borrower with a £200,000 mortgage on a tracker would see annual repayments jump by about £1,400 from current levels.

"That would add to the pain that the past year and a half has already wrought," said Sarah Coles, head of personal finance at Hargreaves Lansdown. "For anyone with a fixed-rate mortgage due to expire in the next few months, this is incredibly unwelcome news, and the longer that higher rates endure, the more people will find themselves facing far higher mortgage rates, and no idea how to cover the cost."

The latest snapshot from the ONS reflected a steadying in energy prices, which remain high but have not risen further compared with last year.

However, this was offset by the rising cost of a weekly shop as food and non-alcoholic drink prices soared by 19% in the 12 months to April, the fastest annual rate since 1977 and the highest level in western Europe.

Official figures also showed a sharp increase in the cost of telecommunications services, linked to inflation-busting price increases pushed through by mobile phone and broadband providers in April.



▲ *Energy prices remain high but are steadying, according to the ONS*

Charities and anti-poverty campaigners warned that a fall in the headline inflation rate would not automatically spell an improvement in living standards for hard-pressed households, as the cost of basic essentials remained stubbornly high.

Rachel Reeves, the shadow chancellor, said: "As bills keep surging, families will be worried food prices and the cost of other essentials are still increasing.

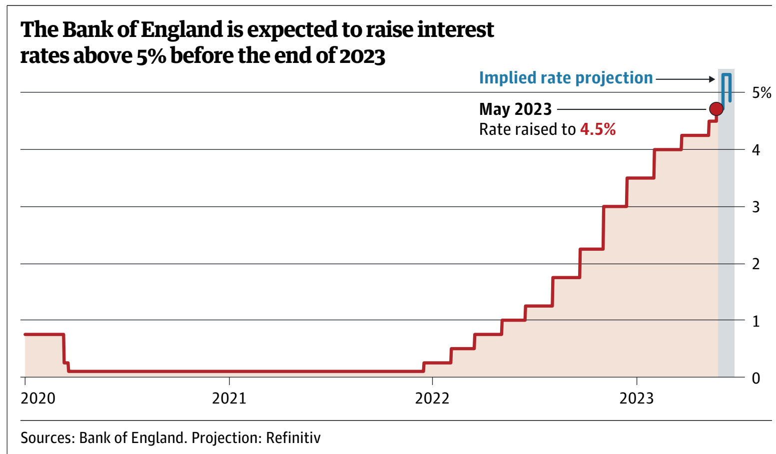
"They will be asking why this Tory government still refuses to properly tackle this cost of living crisis, and why they won't bring in a proper windfall tax on the enormous profits of oil and gas giants."

Andrew Bailey, the Bank governor, said the government could still meet the target of halving inflation, although he appeared to suggest at an event hosted by the Wall Street Journal in London that it was too soon to be certain. "I think we're going to have to see how the news and the evidence unfolds," he said.

Speaking after the release of the inflation figures, Bailey said the central bank's "commitment is absolute" to tackling the rising cost of living. "I have to say it [inflation] is taking longer, and it is higher that was expected certainly earlier this year," he added.

Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, said the government had this week received a stamp of approval from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for its approach.

"The IMF said yesterday we've acted decisively to tackle inflation but although it is positive that it is now in single digits, food prices are still rising too fast," he said.



Sources: Bank of England. Projection: Refinitiv



Energy Ofgem to lower cap but millions still face fuel poverty

Jillian Ambrose
Energy correspondent

The energy regulator is poised to announce a lower cap on energy bills today, making gas and electricity cheaper across the UK, but the reduction will still leave about 6.5 million households in fuel poverty.

Under Ofgem's price cap, which will take effect from July, the average gas and electricity bill will fall from £2,500 a year under the government's energy price guarantee to just over £2,053, according to estimates from energy analysts at Cornwall Insight.

However, households that struggled to pay their bills over the winter are expected to remain hard-pressed because government payments worth a total of £400 between October to March this year have ended.

At more than £2,000, typical bills will remain almost double the level they were at before Russia began restricting gas supplies to Europe as it prepared to invade Ukraine. In October 2021, the typical household paid £1,271 a year for gas and electricity.

In a forecast that will alarm many people, Cornwall's analysts have warned they do not expect bills to return to pre-2020 levels "before the end of the decade at the earliest".

Gas market prices across Europe surged as Russia began to restrict its gas exports during 2021 in a row over Germany's decision to delay approving a key Russian gas pipeline. Gas prices reached new highs, 10 times higher than typical gas prices, after its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Cornwall's analysts warned that "geopolitical incidents could still have a significant impact on energy prices" in the future. Gas deliveries from Gazprom, the Kremlin-controlled gas company, to European buyers have fallen by 80% as governments sanction Russian imports. But replacement gas - from the US and the Middle East - is more expensive and will probably keep gas market prices high until Europe's major economies can reduce their reliance on Russian gas through greater investments in green energy.

Peter Smith, director of National Energy Action, a fuel poverty charity, said: "It is good news energy prices are no longer spiralling, but the energy crisis is far from over."

National Energy Action calculated that the number of households in fuel poverty would remain at about 6.5 million under the new cap. This figure is lower than the 7.5 million estimate for the winter months but on a par with levels last April, when fuel poverty hit the record high.

Smith said: "Bills are still two-thirds higher than they were in October 2021, which is simply unaffordable for millions."

Analysis
Phillip Inman



Blame is easy to apportion. What's harder to find is reliable data on why prices keep rising

Inflation is falling, but not as fast as everyone had hoped. The Bank of England expected a bigger drop and so did the majority of City analysts.

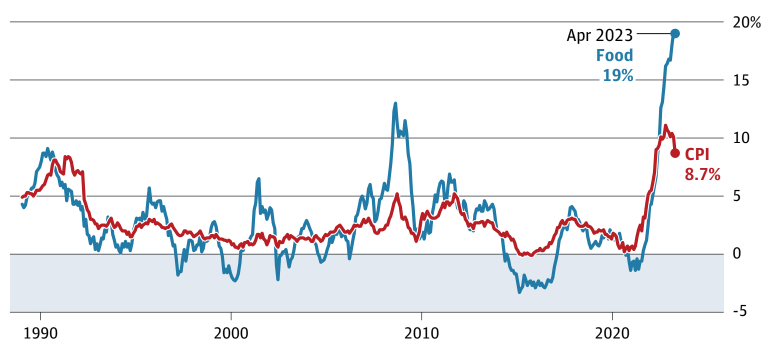
A fall in the consumer prices index to 8.7% in April from 10.1% in March put an end to the UK's long period of double-digit price rises, but was not the 8.2% analysts had predicted. When the global price of gas began to plummet in the first months of the year, there were forecasts from some of the City's big hitters that inflation would drop to below 3% by the end of 2023.

Those predictions are now in the bin. Inflation is more likely to end the year above 5%, prompting the central bank to push interest rates up from 4.5% towards 5.5% if the latest betting on financial markets is a guide. And there are political implications. Rishi Sunak may miss



Food inflation remains at a historic high despite a fall in the headline rate

Annual CPI and food and non-alcoholic beverage inflation rate, %



Source: ONS. Consumer price inflation, UK: April 2023

his target of halving inflation by the end of 2023. Jeremy Hunt will need to explain to the nation why the government's borrowing costs, which are tied to some extent to inflation and the interest rate charged by the Bank of England, could escalate sharply.

In the search for who or what to blame, the first culprit is food, which hit an inflation rate of almost 20% earlier this year and has remained at that level ever since.

It was only on Tuesday that Hunt met food producers to ask them why prices continued to accelerate when all their major costs were falling. From his public statements, he was none the wiser, saying only that he reserved the right to impose price controls.

Hunt's Treasury staff have failed to produce any studies examining why food inflation remains a significant factor, preferring to rely on surveys.

Analysis by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in January examined the extra costs faced by the corporate sector, but the information in the study is now six months out of date.

What we know from more recent data is that for the past two months, businesses have put up prices by more than their costs have risen. The latest data for April shows input prices were up by 3.9%, while output prices increased by 5.4%.

The cost increases faced by farmers and food manufacturers are likely to be falling at a faster rate. Fertiliser prices have dived, energy prices have eased and agricultural and manufacturing wage rises are modest, which raises the question of why food prices are still accelerating.

Paul Donovan, the chief economist at UBS wealth management, is clear that thousands of companies, those with the pricing power in their sectors, have jacked up bills for many months, improving profit margins at customers' expense. Corporate-driven greedflation is considered a problem in the eurozone and is much discussed in the US.



▲ *Jeremy Hunt has relied on surveys rather than any in-depth research*

Cost increases faced by farmers and food manufacturers are falling, which raises the question of why food prices are accelerating

The Bank of England governor, Andrew Bailey, worries about food inflation but, like Hunt, he has failed to commission any in-depth research from his 4,500 staff.

The governor has focused more on the second culprit, core inflation, which leapt in April to 6.8% from 6.2% in March. Core inflation strips out volatile items such as food and energy. The increase here is being driven by business services – which includes workers in finance, accounting, legal, marketing and advertising. This category experienced wage inflation of 8.8% in the three months to the end of March, according to the latest ONS figures.

Again there is an absence of research on the drivers behind core inflation. The problem for Bailey is that without a grip on the sources of inflation, the public's already waning trust in the central bank may sink further.

Brexit
Trade barriers add £7bn to household costs – report

Phillip Inman

British households have paid £7bn since Brexit to cover the extra cost of trade barriers on food imports from the EU, according to London School of Economics (LSE) researchers.

The university's latest report estimating the impact of leaving the bloc on UK food prices found that trade barriers were consistently hampering imports, pushing up bills by an average £250.

The cost of food in the UK had rocketed by 25% since 2019, the researchers calculated, but if the post-Brexit trade restrictions were not in place then this increase would be only 17% – nearly a third lower.

Adding up the impact on all British households suggested they had paid an extra £6.95bn as a consequence, they said.

"Between December 2019 and March 2023 food prices rose by almost 25%. This analysis suggests that in the absence of Brexit this figure would be 8 percentage points (30%) lower," the report found.

Last year, the LSE's centre for economic performance said that leaving the EU had added an average of £210 to household food bills over the two years to the end of 2021, at a cost of £5.8bn.

The UK has the highest food inflation rate in the industrialised world, according to recent data.

In the latest figures from the Office for National Statistics, the consumer prices index measure of inflation fell to 8.7% in April from 10.1% in March, but food inflation over the past year remained elevated at 19%.

Brexit trade barriers include extra paperwork to validate goods and veterinary checks on livestock.

Nikhil Datta, one of the report's authors, said it was possible food costs would continue to spiral.

"Not everything has been instituted at the border. For instance, not all veterinary checks are being carried out," he said. "It could be that there will be no adjustment in prices when they do take effect because businesses have already accounted for the extra costs.

"Or the extra barriers, when they come into effect, do increase prices and householders will face a further increase in their food costs."

The International Monetary Fund has urged the government to lower non-tariff barriers to trade to reduce inflation.

In a health check on the UK economy, the Washington-based body said the government should work to bring down inflation generated by trade barriers with its main trade partners after the Windsor framework between London and Brussels.

2 FOR £8
BEST OF BBQ

Summertime is barbecue time, and right now we're offering 2 for £8 from our barbecue range. Choose from a selection, including Tikka Chicken Breast Kebabs, New York Style Beef Burgers, Chimichurri Bavette Steaks and Harissa Halloumi Kebabs.

IN STORE | APP | WAITROSE.COM



Serving suggestion. Waitrose Summer 4 Tikka Chicken Breast Kebabs 250g, £4.25, £17/kg. Waitrose Summer 4 New York Style Beef Burgers 454g, £4.25, £9.36/kg. Waitrose Summer 4 Harissa Halloumi Kebabs 240g, £4.25, £1.78/100g. Waitrose Summer 4 Chimichurri Bavette Steaks 280g, £4.25, £15.18/kg. Offer ends 5 September. Selected lines and stores. Subject to availability. Minimum online spend and delivery charges apply. Prices may vary in Channel Islands, Little Waitrose & Partners and concessions. Prices correct at time of going to print.

UCL students seek compensation for Covid-hit tuition

Sally Weale
Education correspondent

Lawyers representing almost 1,000 current and former students whose studies were affected by Covid and strike action have told the high court in London their clients felt "cheated" by their educational experience and should be entitled to seek compensation through the courts.

They are seeking to bring a claim against University College London (UCL), accusing it of breaking its "promises", after tuition was moved online and access to libraries and laboratories restricted during the pandemic, with no discount to their "eye-watering" tuition fees.

In a case which will be closely watched by other universities, UCL is arguing against students' attempts to bring a group action through the courts, insisting they should instead pursue claims through the university's internal complaints procedure.

If they are not satisfied, UCL says they can take their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, an body set up to review student complaints about higher education providers in England and Wales.

At a preliminary hearing yesterday before Judge Barbara Fontaine, Anna Boase KC, representing the students, told the court they had entered into a bargain with UCL for which they had paid handsomely - £9,250 a year in tuition fees and considerably more for international students. "They didn't get what they bargained for and they seek justice," she said.

In written arguments, Boase said: "The claimants' case is that, on all versions of the student contract, UCL owed a duty to provide in-person tuition and physical access to facilities."

She said UCL's "contractual performance fell short of that promised", yet it had not offered students fee discounts "in recognition of its short performance" during the pandemic.

The court was told that 924 students have issued claims against UCL, with 2,147 more wishing to have their cases added to the legal action. The law firms Harcus Parker and Asserson claim more than 100,000 students have signed up to a group claim on a no-win, no-fee basis, potentially seeking compensation from 100 UK universities.

> *'The students did not get what they bargained for and they seek justice'*
>
> **Anna Boase KC**
> *at preliminary hearing*

John Taylor KC, for UCL, said in written arguments that the alternative complaints procedures were "fair, transparent and accessible", and could save time and money.

He also said the claims against the university needed more detail and had been "formulated at an inappropriately high level of abstraction".

UCL issued a statement in which Prof Kathleen Armour, its vice-president for education and student experience, said it had followed government guidance during the pandemic, had provided a "high-quality academic experience" and minimised the impact of industrial action.

"We respect the right of our students to complain and seek redress if they feel that they have not received the support they expected from us," she said. "That is why we have a well-established and free complaints procedure. We believe the group litigation order is unnecessary and premature."

The hearing concluded yesterday, and a written ruling will be handed down at a future date.

Additional reporting **PA Media**



Making an entrance
Two of the cotton-headed tamarin triplets born at Marwell Zoo near Winchester on 6 May clinging to a parent's fur. The critically endangered monkeys are "doing well", keepers say.

PHOTOGRAPH: MARWELL ZOO/PA

Judge rejects attempt to outlaw fast-growing 'Frankenchickens'

Haroon Siddique
Legal affairs correspondent

Animal welfare campaigners say billions of chickens will lead "utterly miserable lives" after the failure of a high court challenge to the legality of fast-growing breeds.

The Humane League UK (THL), represented by Advocates for Animals, argued that the environment secretary, Thérèse Coffey, had erred in law by letting farmers in England keep so-called "Frankenchickens", which reach their slaughter weight of about 2.2kg (nearly 5lb) in 34 to 36 days.

At a hearing this month, THL claimed the government policy on broiler chickens breached 2007 farmed animals rules, which state: "Animals may only be kept for farming purposes if it can reasonably be expected, on the basis of their genotype or phenotype, that they can be kept without any detrimental effect on their health or welfare."

> **90%**
> *Proportion of the billion meat chickens slaughtered each year that are fast-growing breeds*

In a written judgment yesterday dismissing the challenge, Sir Ross Cranston said Coffey had not "positively authorised or approved unlawful conduct by others".

Sean Gifford, of THL, said: "'Frankenchickens' lead utterly miserable lives, and we think the legal system is failing them. Defra could ensure chickens no longer endure painful leg deformities, open sores and heart attacks because of their genes. But now over 1 billion thinking, feeling animals will be left to suffer."

Nine in 10 of the billion meat chickens killed annually are fast-growing breeds. THL said about 1 million died before slaughter each week, excluding bird flu deaths. It said Coffey had not properly monitored farmers and had ignored the scientific consensus on their suffering. Cranston said Coffey accepted "there may be a higher risk of welfare issues with fast-growing meat chickens, but takes the view they can be kept without detriment to their welfare since environmental conditions can have an influence on the health and welfare of birds … it cannot be said [she] acted contrary to her legal duties."

Edie Bowles,a solicitor for THL, said: "If the government is not responsible for regulating this standard industry practice, then who is?" The RSPCA called it a missed chance "to make the single most important change for animals in 200 years".

In brief

Police

Search for Madeleine likely to be extended

The first major search for Madeleine McCann in a decade was yesterday expected to be extended into a third day as Portuguese and German police continued to dig into the wooded banks of a reservoir in the Algarve.

The operation, 30 miles from where the three-year-old girl went missing in 2007, had been due to end yesterday. The operation had been requested by German police after they reportedly discovered photographs of the convicted rapist Christian Brückner at the area, his self-described "little paradise", near the town of Silves.
Daniel Boffey and Kate Connolly

Royal family

Duchess 'sad' at death of woman hit by escort

The Duchess of Edinburgh has said she is "deeply saddened" by the death of a woman who was hit by her police motorcycle escort.

Helen Holland, 81, was struck in Earl's Court, London, on 10 May. Her son Martin said she had died after sustaining "multiple broken bones and massive internal injuries" on a pedestrian crossing.

"Her royal highness's deepest condolences and sympathies go to all of Ms Holland's family," a Buckingham Palace spokesperson said yesterday.

The Independent Office for Police Conduct is investigating.
Geneva Adbul and agency

Health

Strictly star announces breast cancer diagnosis

The Strictly Come Dancing star Amy Dowden revealed yesterday that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer. The professional dancer, below, who joined the BBC show in 2017, shared the news on Instagram.

The 32-year-old wrote: "Hey all, I've got some news which isn't easy to share. I've recently been diagnosed with breast cancer, but I'm determined to get back on that dancefloor before you know it."

She said she had found a lump in her breast in April, the day before going to the Maldives on a delayed honeymoon with her husband.
PA Media



Review

A charming foodie film, but not my cup of tea

The Pot-au-Feu
Cannes film festival
★★★☆☆

Peter Bradshaw

Here is a beautifully shot movie from the estimable film-maker Tran Anh Hung - but it's in a genre about which I am agnostic, the "foodie" vein, in which we are supposed to swoon over all the endless gastronomic detail and mouthwatering fare, and in which food tends to be somewhat glibly presented as a metaphor for sharing, for family and for friendship.

(A friend says "foodie" films are no worse than the "filmie" films I roll over for, with their love-letter-to-the-cinema shots of projector beams in the darkness and well-loved movie theatres poignantly closing after 80 years. Fair enough.)

The Pot-au-Feu, starring Benoît Magimel and Juliette Binoche, set in the Belle Époque, is adapted from the 1924 novel The Life and Passion of Dodin-Bouffant, Gourmet by the author, gourmand and *boulevardier* Marcel Rouff.

Magimel plays Dodin, a passionate gourmet, partly based on the legendary gastronome Jean Brillat-Savarin. Dodin does not run a restaurant - he's just rich enough to do nothing all day but think about and eat top-quality food.

Dodin's expertise is known far and wide and he has a cook, Eugénie, played by Binoche, who is equally admired, and with whom Dodin is not-so-secretly in love. She brilliantly interprets every demand Dodin lays down for her: like him, she has an instinctive, creative



▲ *Benoît Magimel, director Tran Anh Hung and Juliette Binoche*
PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE COPPOLA/GETTY

appreciation of the taste, texture, composition and fragrance of food. The tiresome question of those who can't afford to eat like this, or very much at all, is not mentioned and the absence of piety is probably for the best.

There are many static shots of these dishes being prepared and of Binoche and Magimel duly appreciating them, inviting our drooling at all this refined sensory luxury. I blasphemously longed for a 25-minute shot of the pair trying to download the Deliveroo app with only a 3G signal.

Dodin is in the habit of inviting a group of grand male friends round for regular spectacular dinners, while Eugénie shyly eats on her own in the kitchen with the maid and the maid's 13-year-old niece, who shows a prodigious talent for cuisine herself.



Magimel and Binoche lack a pinch of chemistry

One evening, a pompous foreign nobleman invites Dodin and his friend-group for dinner and tries to impress him with an absurdly over-lavish and unsubtle megafeast. Feeling compelled to return the favour, Dodin decides to invite this aristocrat back to his, but intends to serve merely the "pot-au-feu" - radically, inspirationally simple and honest rustic fare. (Again some blasphemy from me: I found myself remembering and preferring Anton Ego's admiration for the signature dish in the Pixar movie Ratatouille.) But there is something else - poor Eugénie appears to be ill and Dodin may have to prepare for her a pot-au-feu of pure sincere love.

There is charm and delicacy here and Magimel and Binoche perform impeccably, though I'm not entirely sure they go together as the ingredients of a love story. As a foodie film, it has a great deal to recommend it and I found it engaging, though perhaps as a Dr Jekyll to the Mr Hyde of Marco Ferreri's La Grande Bouffe. Perhaps there will be a 230-minute director's cut soon with a marathon washing-up scene at the end.



Police will not contest appeal of man jailed for 17 years over Salford rape

Emily Dugan

Greater Manchester police will not oppose the appeal of a man who spent 17 years in prison for rape when no DNA linked him to the crime, the Guardian has learned.

Andrew Malkinson was convicted in 2004 of the rape of a 33-year-old woman who was left for dead on a motorway embankment in Salford. He always insisted he was innocent, extending his prison time by a decade as a result.

Malkinson's case was referred to the court of appeal in January after another man's DNA was found on the victim's clothing. His appeal will be heard in July.

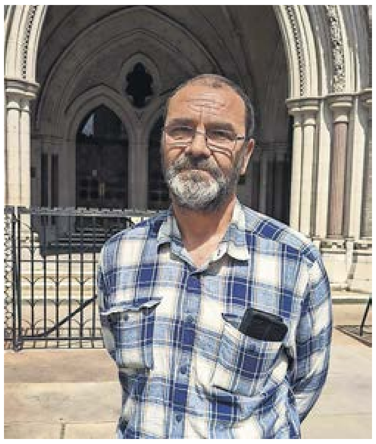
Until this week it was thought that Greater Manchester police (GMP) and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) might contest the case, but they said the DNA breakthrough meant they no longer considered Malkinson's conviction safe.

However, they confirmed they would fight to keep the scope of the appeal narrowly focused on the DNA developments that prompted the original referral to the court. This would mean no scrutiny of alleged disclosure failures that Malkinson's lawyers argue contributed to his wrongful conviction.

Malkinson, 57, said: "I've suffered incalculably for the last 20 years as a result of my wrongful conviction, and I continue to suffer each day. I have always known I am innocent. Finally, the prosecution has acknowledged my conviction should not stand."

A jury found Malkinson guilty by 10-2 on the basis of witness evidence but the court was not told of the extensive criminal records of two witnesses, or that one was a long-term heroin user.

The victim also said she recalled causing a "deep scratch" to her attacker's face, but Malkinson had no marks the next day. Photographs of her hand showing a broken nail after the attack were not disclosed in the original trial. Instead the judge was able to suggest that she may have been "mistaken" about the scratch.



▲ *Andrew Malkinson said: 'I have always known I am innocent'*

The CPS does not accept that there were disclosure failings and argues these points "do not render the convictions unsafe".

Malkinson said: "It is still the court of appeal's decision to grant me justice. I sincerely hope they will give serious consideration to the disclosure failures which denied me a fair trial. The police must be made accountable. No one should have to suffer what I've been through."

> ***'Police must be made accountable. No one should suffer what I've been through'***
>
> **Andrew Malkinson**
> *On his rape conviction*

A man was arrested last December on suspicion of the rape after new DNA testing of a sample from the victim's top matched his on the police database. He has been released under investigation. The testing used in the latest DNA investigation was not introduced until 2015 and was not available at trial.

Emily Bolton, Malkinson's solicitor at Appeal, said: "Andy's 17 years of wrongful imprisonment were avoidable. We will be arguing that Andy's conviction is unsafe not only in view of new DNA evidence, but because there were significant disclosure failures at his trial."

A CPS spokesperson said: "After reviewing new DNA evidence after the CCRC made its referral in 2023, the CPS has agreed that the conviction of Mr Malkinson is no longer safe. Therefore, the CPS will no longer contest his appeal."

They added that "a decision to overturn a conviction is a matter for the court of appeal". A spokesperson for GMP confirmed the force had decided not to contest the appeal and said it "would be inappropriate to comment until the conclusion of the court of appeal hearing".

Record 272,000 patients pay for healthcare

Denis Campbell
Health policy editor

Record numbers of people are paying for private healthcare, spending up to £3,200 on having a cataract removed and £15,075 on a new hip, amid growing frustration over NHS waiting lists.

In the UK last year 272,000 people used their own funds to cover the cost of having an operation or diagnostic procedure at a private hospital. This was up from 262,000 the year before and a sharp rise on the 199,000 who did so in 2019, before the pandemic.

In 2022, private hospitals treated a record 820,000 inpatients and day patients, according to data from the Private Healthcare Information Network (PHIN), a specialist data collection organisation. About 547,000 of those patients paid for their treatment using private medical insurance – the highest number since 2019.

Ian Gargan, PHIN's chief executive, said "long NHS waiting lists and uncertainty around how long you'll be waiting" were driving the surge in private healthcare.



A GB News week

Bashing the woke, the global elite and the WHO

Heather Stewart

Rishi Sunak came to power in an "anti-democratic coup" and is in hock to a shadowy "globalist elite"; mass migration is "replacing" British culture, and net zero is a "suicide note" - not the rantings of an internet troll, but a snapshot of views espoused by presenters on GB News across seven days last week.

The Guardian watched a week's worth of output from the upstart rightwing channel in an attempt to understand the worldview at work - and how GB News gets away with sailing so close to the wind.

Since the broadcasting veteran Andrew Neil quit as chair three months after the channel's launch, complaining that he was in "a minority of one" about its direction, GB News has increasingly planted its flag on the radical right of British politics.

With a monthly reach of 2.8 million viewers - twice that of its Murdoch rival TalkTV - and a place in the political "pool" in which major broadcasters share filming duties, GB News's boss, Angelos Frangopoulos, told staff in a recent email, "we are firmly part of the mainstream media".

But some of the views regularly encountered on the channel are anything but mainstream.

Last summer it secured an additional £60m in funding from founding investors Paul Marshall - an ex-Liberal Democrat who went on to be a vehement Brexiter - and Legatum Ventures Ltd, the Dubai-based financial firm behind the free-market Legatum Institute thinktank.

In January Marshall wrote on the website UnHerd, which he also funded, that Prince Harry had fallen victim to "the woke creed", which he claimed had also infected other institutions, including newsrooms. Rejecting this "woke creed" seems a constant preoccupation at GB News, which Frangopoulos styles as "staunchly non-metropolitan".

Much of its output is standard fare for a rolling news channel: last week there was Eurovision gossip and speculation about Phillip Schofield's future and Harry's car chase, punctuated by anodyne news updates.

But at the heart of its anti-establishment pitch is a string of presenters whose shows are shot through with their fiercely rightwing opinions. These include the former Coast presenter Neil Oliver, the actor turned populist Laurence Fox and the ex-Brexit party leader Nigel Farage.

Less well known presenters, including Patrick Christys in the 3pm weekday slot, and Mark Dolan at 10pm at weekends, are equally forthright. These TV shock jocks generally kick off each hour with a polemical monologue.

Frequently the tone is arch, rather than earnest, and discussion panels often feature at least one leftwinger, albeit rarely a senior figure (perhaps in part because the channel's reputation deters many from appearing). Viewers' contributions also feature heavily as the channel builds a committed community, with emails read out live and frequent use of vox pops. But the framing of sensitive topics by highly opinionated hosts sometimes appears to stretch the definition of "due impartiality", as demanded by Ofcom.

GB News has already fallen foul of the broadcasters' regulator twice - most recently, for an appearance by the Covid conspiracy theorist Naomi Wolf on the Mark Steyn Show, in which she linked the vaccine to "mass murder". Steyn has since left the channel.

The ruling was on the grounds of potential harm to viewers rather than due impartiality, however. Ofcom made clear that broadcasters are "free to transmit programmes that include controversial and challenging views" - so long as they don't go completely unchallenged.

The regulator also declined to pursue complaints about an episode of Oliver's show in February, despite conceding that he had made references to "a global elite controlling world politics" - an idea sometimes regarded as an antisemitic trope or at best a baseless conspiracy theory.

The regulator said it had "issued guidance to GB News to ensure they take care when discussing conspiracy theories, given the potential harm to audiences".

The Board of Deputies of British Jews and the all-party parliamentary group against antisemitism had urged Ofcom to act. At the time, a GB News spokesperson said: "GB News abhors racism and hate and would never allow it on the channel."





▲ *Jacob Rees-Mogg is one of the Conservative MPs hosting GB News shows, as well as Nigel Farage, left*
PHOTOGRAPHS: PA MEDIA; SOPA IMAGES VIA GETTY

'Cooperation with the WHO amounts to letting unelected nonentities living tax free in Switzerland shut us in our homes'



Neil Oliver

The broadcast code enforced by Ofcom is clear that opinionated hosts are fine but "alternative viewpoints must be adequately represented". It has not specified what exactly that means, but GB News insiders believe 10%-15% representation for differing views is probably adequate.

A spokesperson for the channel said: "GB News chose to be an Ofcom-regulated channel and we take the Broadcast Code seriously. All staff receive Ofcom training to ensure they understand the code and the importance we place on complying with it.

"Ofcom is very clear that broadcasters are required to include a range of views. Diversity of opinion is what GB News is all about."

Oliver gave little sign of having changed in last Saturday's show, arguing that the fact that Pfizer's Covid vaccine was not tested to assess whether it reduced transmission showed "the nudge unit campaign to shame people into taking the jabs and force them on the kids as well in the spirit of protecting others was a lie".

As Full Fact has pointed out, the jab did reduce the likelihood of catching Covid in the first place, which seems relevant.

In the same monologue, Oliver claimed the government's cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO) in combating future pandemics amounted to letting "unelected, unaccountable nonentities living tax free in Switzerland and protected by diplomatic immunity shut us in our homes". For good measure, he also described net zero - cutting greenhouse gas emissions to nothing - as "a suicide note".

Watching GB News's deliberately provocative shows back to back last week, some of the themes that recur include gender, the "war on motorists", working from home (it's "bankrupting Britain") - and most of all, the menace of migration.

A Daily Telegraph story earlier this month, based on a projection by the rightwing thinktank the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), suggested annual net immigration could hit 1 million, when the data is published this month.

Jonathan Portes, a migration expert from UK in a Changing Europe, who took part in a robust discussion with Rees-Mogg on GB News last week, called this "worse than a zombie statistic". Describing



the CPS analysis behind it, Portes said: "I teach a class on migration and if I were marking this from one of my students it would barely scrape a pass."

Yet the number took on a life of its own, repeated across the media – and combined with the home secretary Suella Braverman's public call for a cut to legal migration at the national conservatism conference on Monday, it helped to supercharge the issue.

On GB News, it formed part of the framing of discussions. On Laurence Fox's show on Friday, which included an extended monologue on what he calls "racialism", (apparently a hierarchy imposed by leftwingers which dictates "dark skin good, light skin bad") Fox mimed his response to the 1 million figure by drawing out an imaginary pistol and pretending to shoot himself in the head.

He was then joined for a discussion about migration with Ben Habib, a former Brexit party MEP now of the Reform party – a rival to Fox's own fringe party, Reclaim. Perhaps not surprisingly, the pair were in firm agreement.

"I feel like my culture is being replaced in front of my eyes," Fox complained, before jokingly asking Habib: "In the interests of balance, are you and I just white supremacists?"

The idea of a "Great Replacement", in which white Europeans are supplanted by people of colour (and specifically Muslims), has roots on the far right.

Christys also took aim at the cultural threat from immigration in his Monday afternoon show. "All too often in my view it's deemed socially unacceptable to say: 'I'm really sorry, but I don't want the place where I live and where I've grown up to become minority white British or even just minority British' – but there is a stigma attached to that: is it racist to think that way?" His guest, Benjamin Loughnane, who works on migration for the Thatcherite thinktank the Bow Group, reassured him it was not.

GB News also has several Conservative MPs on its roster, for whom creating controversy on the airwaves is only a part-time job. The former cabinet minister Rees Mogg has his own show. The deputy Tory chair Lee Anderson was recently added to the payroll on £100,000 a year.

Ofcom is investigating whether the 11 March edition of the weekend breakfast show from the chatty husband-and-wife team Esther McVey and Philip Davies, both Tory MPs, in which they interviewed the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, broke its rules requiring news and current affairs to be presented "with due impartiality". GB News has not commented on the investigation.

As the week on GB News rolled on, it was sometimes hard to credit that the Conservatives are in power, as the channel's rightwing hosts lined up to attack Sunak.

A betrayal narrative is firmly in place – with Sunak as the "globalist" villain, and more rightwing figures, including Braverman, the defenders of true Conservatism.

Of course, Keir Starmer is another favourite baddie, regularly referred to as "slimy Starmer" or "slippery Starmer" – though it doesn't stop Labour frontbenchers appearing on GB News.

Wootton hosted a panel discussion on which partnership was the most dysfunctional: Starmer's with his deputy, Angela Rayner, or Phillip Schofield's with Holly Willoughby.

But the loudest howls of derision were reserved for Sunak and his cabinet. On Christys' Tuesday show, one tagline across the screen read "Grow a Pair, Rishi".

Two years after launching as a scrappy upstart, the channel still at times retains the air of a low-budget start-up. On Sunday's breakfast show, Ellie Costello apologised for her audibly squeaking chair.

Presenters regularly appear as guests on each other's shows – with Wootton welcoming Farage to give his prescription for "saving Brexit", for example. One of Rees Mogg's panels included his own sister.

But scrappy or not, GB News is giving a powerful platform to radical rightwingers; amplifying a ragbag of conspiracy theories and, perhaps, laying the polemical groundwork for a very different Conservatism, when Sunak loses.



▲ Ofcom ruled that the channel had breached impartiality rules when Naomi Wolf's comments on Covid-19, made on Mark Steyn's show, went unchallenged



▶ Angelos Frangopoulos, GB News's boss. Below, Paul Marshall, a significant investor and Brexiter who has been vocal about 'the woke creed'



'I feel like my culture is being replaced in front of my eyes. In the interests of balance, are you and I white supremacists'



Laurence Fox

Huge Welsh opencast coalmine still operating after licence expired

Damien Gayle

Miners have continued to dig hundreds of tonnes a day from a controversial opencast coalmine in south Wales, months after its licence expired.

Despite its licence to operate having ended nine months ago, every day hydraulic dump trucks have continued to haul consignments of coal from the Ffos-y-Fran mine, just above the town of Merthyr Tydfil. During that time, the price of coal has reached all-time highs, hitting $450 a tonne last September – about nine times its price two years earlier.

Coal Authority records suggest nearly 200,000 tonnes of coal have been dug from Ffos-y-Fran since its licence expired. But despite that potential bonanza, the mine's owners have so far failed to provide the funds needed to restore the site – a promise that was the pretext for licensing the mine in the first place.

Spanning 450 hectares (1,100 acres), Ffos-y-Fran is Britain's biggest opencast coalmine. It has long been opposed by climate campaigners, as well as local people, and was only approved after its original owner promised to use some of its profits to restore the land.

Until a few years ago, the vast mine's centre of operations was just 300 metres from the home of Chris and Alyson Austin. They and their children moved to the area in 2003, two years before the mine was approved, and right into the fight against it. "The noise and the dust was beyond anything you can imagine. It blighted our lives; it ruined our lives," Chris Austin said.

"We always realised the dust would be unbearable," Alyson Austin said. "But what we didn't anticipate was the noise and intrusion of it."

"It was just all-pervading," her husband said. "You can't turn the TV up over the top of it. It's a low frequency. It's as if you had a lorry parked out the front for 15, 16 hours a day."

The Austins also run the local chapter of Friends of the Earth, and so were keenly aware too of the mine's environmental impact.

"They've dug 11m tonnes [of coal], at least – I mean, that's what they've declared," Chris Austin said. "You do the maths on how much that has impacted global warming, climate change, Wales's carbon footprint. It's massive."

On 7 September last year, the date the mine's original planning permission expired, its operations did not end. In the meantime, the site's operators, Merthyr (South Wales), applied to extend the mine's lifespan until the end of March 2024, which they said would allow them to extract the 240,000 tonnes of coal left in the mine.

Chris Austin said the council had refused to intervene before a decision was taken on the application, saying that otherwise they might stop Merthyr (South Wales) from doing something they were later given permission to do. But three weeks ago, the planning authority finally rejected the application.

However, the mining has continued, and the council has not acted to stop it. Photographs sent to the council yesterday, shared with the Guardian, showed hydraulic dump trucks carrying loads of coal to the rail loading bay at Ffos-y-Fran.

Meanwhile, it emerged in documents accompanying the most recent planning application that Merthyr (South Wales) had deposited just £15m into an escrow account intended to hold the cash needed for the site to be restored. The council has estimated that the cost of restoring Ffos-y-Fran will be at least £75m, and could reach £125m.

At council planning meetings, David Lewis, director of Merthyr (South Wales), said the company could not afford to restore the site, and claimed it was operating at a loss. Accounts filed with Companies House said Merthyr (South Wales) made a £2.8m loss in 2021 and a £10.2m loss in 2020. More recent figures were not available.

A council spokesperson confirmed that any mining still going on there was "without planning permission" and that council officers were conducting a "thorough investigation" to determine "what enforcement action is the most appropriate".

Merthyr (South Wales) did not respond to the Guardian for comment, but told Wales Online that it was in "active discussions [with the council] for a safe cessation of coaling which includes ongoing restoration".



◀ The owners of the Ffos-y-Fran coalmine say they cannot now afford to restore the site
PHOTOGRAPH: MATTHEW HORWOOD/GETTY

Eyewitness



▼ Toulouse, France
Operators take Asterion, a 14-metre-high minotaur puppet, to the Halle de la Machine theatrical museum
PHOTOGRAPH: VALENTINE CHAPUIS/AFP



World

'Frightening for democracy': Ron DeSantis starts his run for American presidency

Martin Pengelly *New York*
Richard Luscombe *Miami*

The 2024 Republican presidential primary started in earnest last night with the formal entry of Ron DeSantis, the hard-right Florida governor who is the closest challenger to Donald Trump.

DeSantis put in his paperwork before addressing his decision in a video posted on social media. He tried to discuss his decision further in conversation with Elon Musk on Twitter, although the audio stream crashed repeatedly.

"We need the courage to lead and the strength to win," DeSantis said in his short video. "I'm Ron DeSantis, and I'm running for president to lead our great American comeback."

One prominent Florida Democratic congressman told the Guardian a DeSantis campaign "should frighten anyone who values democracy, voting rights, civil rights, freedom and the pursuit of happiness".

In preparation for the campaign to be the Republican nominee, DeSantis's website switched to a sinister image of an alligator lurking in dark water against a black background.

The implication of such a distinctly Floridian flourish might have been that DeSantis would soon emerge to attack Trump and drag him into the swamp of a truly competitive Republican primary race.

But although Trump faces unprecedented legal jeopardy – now including a trial in the criminal case over hush money payments to the porn star Stormy Daniels due to start on 25 March 2024, as the primary race rages – he has used that jeopardy to claim political persecution and build huge polling leads.

The man who refused to accept defeat by Joe Biden and incited the deadly January 6 attack on Congress, and attempted election subversion for which he could soon be indicted by prosecutors, leads DeSantis by more than 30 points in polls.

As Trump's numbers have risen so those for DeSantis have fallen, even as he has signed into law a succession of hard-right policies meant to appeal to Republican primary voters.

Democrats, pollsters and political observers say DeSantis's Florida policy agenda – including attacks on LGBTQ+ rights and the teaching of critical race theory in schools, loosened gun control laws and a ban on abortions after the sixth week – will count against the governor should he win the nomination and proceed to the 2024 presidential election.

Some Republicans, including major donors, have expressed concern over the abortion ban, one of the strictest in the US, and over DeSantis's high-profile fight with Disney, a huge Florida employer that opposes a so-called "don't say gay" law concerning teaching in public schools.

DeSantis's perceived lack of social and campaigning skills has also been relentlessly scrutinised, not least as a succession of Florida Republican lawmakers made early endorsements of Trump. He has made missteps on foreign policy and seen questions raised about his time as a US Navy lawyer at Guantánamo Bay.

DeSantis has built a campaign structure and an impressive war chest, retaining major donors, and this week spoke confidently of a two-term presidency giving him the chance to cement a 7-2 conservative supreme court majority to last "a quarter-century".

In Florida, opponents of DeSantis denounced his announcement plans and expressed the fear he was preparing to export his extremist agenda nationally. "What's happened in Florida should scare every single person across the entire country," Maxwell Frost, a progressive Democratic congressman, said.

"Ron DeSantis running for president should frighten anyone who values democracy, voting rights, civil rights, freedom and the pursuit of happiness.

"As voters across the country see what he's done in Florida … they will render a very simple 'hell no'."



▶ *Ron DeSantis displays his pen after signing bills during a visit to a Christian school in Florida last week*
PHOTOGRAPH: OCTAVIO JONES/REUTERS

'All hat and no cattle'

Anti-woke Floridian yet to pass 'likability test'

David Smith
Washington

The Florida governor's official website invites visitors to "Meet Governor DeSantis". But anyone who clicks on that option is greeted with the message "Governor Ron DeSantis Biography – coming soon", along with his photo and a big white space.

DeSantis's admirers project on to that blank page the ideal of a strong chief executive, "anti-woke" warrior and consistent election winner. His detractors fill the vacuum with warnings that the Florida governor represents "Trump 2.0", "Trump with a brain" and "Trump without the circus".

Six months ago, DeSantis was being hailed as the future of a Republican party grown tired of the former US president Donald Trump's losing streak. He had offered blueprints for beating Democrats in elections and for exporting a rightwing agenda nationwide: "Make America Florida."

But now that he is seeking the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, DeSantis still has everything to prove about his readiness. Political insiders suggest that he is undercooked and will fail the "likability test" – that is, which candidate would you rather have a beer with?

"I have been saying DeSantis was an overpriced political stock for a year and a half," said Rick Wilson, a Republican strategist who has been involved in more than 30 political campaigns in the state.

"This guy is all hat and no cattle. He doesn't have that natural verbal and political grace that you need to pull off a win against Trump, who is a powerful performer on stage."

DeSantis does have youth on his side. He was born 44 years ago in Jacksonville, Florida, and grew up in Dunedin, a suburb of Tampa, but writes in his book The Courage to Be Free that his upbringing reflected his parents' midwestern working-class background: "This made me God-fearing, hard-working, and America-loving."

In a biographical detail as American as apple pie, the young DeSantis lived and breathed baseball. His team in Dunedin reached the Little League World Series in 1991. He served as captain of the baseball team as an undergraduate at Yale University; his Yale jersey hangs in his office.



▲ *DeSantis goes in to bat at Yale; his early years appear to be a series of all-American milestones*

After Yale, DeSantis taught at a private school in Rome, Georgia, in the 2001-02 school year. One former student told the New York Times that he had taught civil war history in a way that sounded to her like an attempt to justify slavery.

Then, while at Harvard law school, DeSantis was commissioned as an officer in the navy and, on graduation, joined the judge advocate general corps as a lawyer. He was assigned to Guantánamo Bay, where he oversaw the treatment of detainees. Later he was deployed to Iraq to advise a team of Navy Seals.

In 2020 DeSantis married Casey Black, a TV reporter, at Disney World (which he now admits is "kind of ironic", given his subsequent feud with the entertainment company). The couple have three children: Madison, Mason and Mamie. Casey, 42, remains his closest adviser.

'We offended a nation'
US zoo says sorry for mistreating a Kiwi
Page 24

Vinícius Jr
Row forces Spanish to confront racism
Page 27





The challenger

Eight things to know about DeSantis

1 **DeSantis served in the navy and was deployed to Guantánamo Bay and Iraq.** In an article for Al Jazeera, a former Guantánamo detainee, Mansoor Adayfi, claimed DeSantis had been present when Adayfi was force-fed. DeSantis called it "totally BS".

2 **He served in the House of Representatives.** He helped form the ultra-conservative House Freedom Caucus with the aim of shifting Republican leadership and policies as far right as possible.

3 **He aggressively opposed Covid-19 measures.** DeSantis has also spread vaccine denialism widely. He announced a proposal to permanently ban Covid-19 mandates in Florida.

4 **In 2022, DeSantis approved the 'Don't Say Gay' ban.** It prohibits discussions of sexual orientation and gender identity in schools. He also banned African American studies from high schools, saying the subject "lacks educational value".

5 **He is engaged in a legal feud with Disney.** Disney opposed the Don't Say Gay ban. In response, DeSantis seized control of Disney's self-governing special district near Orlando. He has proposed building a state prison in the area.

6 **His police programme is luring officers with violent records.** To attract police officers from other states frustrated by vaccination requirements, DeSantis offered a one-time $5,000 bonus for relocating recruits. A study found that among about 600 officers who relocated to Florida, a "sizeable number" had a slew of complaints or charges against them, including murder and kidnapping.

7 **DeSantis has been accused of favouring insurance industry donors.** According to a report, DeSantis as well as Friends of Ron DeSantis have received $3.9m from insurance industry donors. Meanwhile, Florida residents face homeowner insurance rates that are nearly triple the national average.

8 **DeSantis will face off against Donald Trump.** Last year, Trump warned DeSantis not to run for president and threatened to reveal information about him should he run. **Maya Yang**

DeSantis won his US House of Representatives seat in 2012. In Congress he helped create the hard-right Freedom Caucus focused on "small government" and implacable opposition to then president Barack Obama.

He ran for governor in 2018 and was endorsed by President Trump, ultimately winning by a tight margin. Trump has since taken credit for DeSantis's victory and accused his fellow Republican of being disloyal for challenging him for the White House.

He has shaped legislation, punished critics, sparred with journalists and filled the state's courts, offices and boards with allies. Supporters say his no-nonsense, get-things-done style has made Florida boom. Opponents say he has authoritarian impulses and a mean streak a mile wide.

The turning point in DeSantis's political career was the pandemic. He opposed many of the policies advocated by the federal government to prevent the spread of Covid. He resisted mask and vaccine mandates and was determined to keep Florida's tourism destinations open during most of the pandemic.

His defenders argue that his approach was driven by data and rooted in science because he had primarily been a policy wonk up to that point. But the media backlash helped him find his voice as a mini Trump: an antagonist of "liberal elites" and darling of Fox News, but without the rough edges.

DeSantis's political signature is his foray into the US culture wars, summed up in his proclamation: "Florida is where woke goes to die." He has imposed limits on how race, gender identity and sexuality can be taught in schools, forcing some teachers to remove books from their libraries. He banned transgender athletes from playing girls' and women's sports.

Christian Ziegler, the chair of Florida's Republican party, says DeSantis's status as a father of young children helps explain his desire to fight for parents' rights. "This is a guy who always loves being with his kids and his family. He's either working as governor or he's out at his kids' T-ball games and Little League. You don't hear that … Frankly, I think he should broadcast that more."

Since winning re-election by nearly 20 percentage points last year, he has signed laws banning abortions after six weeks, easing restrictions on carrying concealed firearms and ending the state's unanimous verdict requirement for death penalty cases.

> ***'This guy doesn't have the verbal and political grace you need to win against Trump, who is a powerful performer'***
>
> **Rick Wilson**
> *Republican strategist*

But his mixed messaging on continued US support for Ukraine and reluctance to respond to Trump's attacks have also called into question his political acumen.

Now, with Trump surging ahead of him in the polls, other Republican candidates smell blood.

Ron Klein, a former Democratic congressman from Florida who is chair of the Jewish Democratic Council of America, said: "I never heard the typical thing that I know I presented, and many other people present, about why you did this [went into politics] in the first place.

"What was that single issue that drove you out there? What happened in your childhood or something your parents did or some influence around you that got you? I never heard that or saw it. "

Writer vows to fight back after school bans her poem for Biden inauguration

Ed Pilkington
New York

Amanda Gorman, the American poet who shot to international stardom when she recited The Hill We Climb at Joe Biden's inauguration, vowed yesterday to defeat book bans in Florida after her poem was removed by a primary school in Miami-Dade county.

Gorman, 25, said she was "gutted" to learn that a complaint from a single parent had led to her inaugural poem being banned from the Bob Graham education centre in Miami Lakes.

In the complaint, the parent said she had objected to the poem because it was "not educational" and contained indirect "hate messages".

"Unnecessary book bans like these are on the rise, and we must fight back," Gorman said.

Book bans have surged after a series of laws were signed by the Florida governor and Republican presidential hopeful, Ron DeSantis. The most recent requires books to be banned after a single complaint.

The Miami Herald named the parent who had brought the complaint as Daily Salinas, who specifically referred to two pages of the published version of the poem. They read:

We've braved the belly of the beast.
We've learned that quiet isn't always peace,
and the norms and notions
of what just is
isn't always justice.
And yet the dawn is ours
before we knew it.
Somehow, we do it.
Somehow, we've weathered and witnessed
a nation that isn't broken,
but simply unfinished.

A Miami-Dade county public schools spokesperson denied reports of a ban, saying: "It was determined that The Hill We Climb is better suited for middle school students. The book remains available in the media centre."



▲ *Amanda Gorman reads her poem The Hill We Climb at Joe Biden's inauguration in January 2021*

Angry New Zealanders end 'cruel' petting of kiwi bird at Miami zoo

Tess McClure
Auckland





▲ *The usually nocturnal kiwi in its natural habitat. Left, Zoo Miami visitors being encouraged to handle the typically shy bird, resulting in a wave of complaints*
PHOTOGRAPH: TOMAS GRIGER/ALAMY



The treatment of a kiwi at a Miami zoo has enraged thousands of New Zealanders, who launched a furious campaign to bring their national bird home and prompted the zoo to apologise.

Videos of Pāora , a kiwi bird at Zoo Miami, being handled and petted by guests under bright lights emerged on Tuesday, to almost immediate uproar in New Zealand.

Reclusive and nocturnal, kiwis are beloved in New Zealand to the point that the flightless, rotund ground-dweller has become the country's national icon.

The footage went viral within hours, sparking a 9,000-signature petition, a flood of complaints to the zoo, a government intervention from the Department of Conservation and comments from the prime minister.

Yesterday, a zoo spokesperson Ron Magill said the visitor attraction had "made a huge mistake here". After receiving a flood of complaints, he added, in an interview on Radio New Zealand, "I immediately went to the zoo director, and I said, we have offended a nation."

Later that day, the prime minister, Chris Hipkins, weighed in, saying it "shows a lot of Kiwis take pride in our national bird when they're overseas".

"The New Zealanders who witnessed what was happening there caught it pretty quickly," he said. The prime minister added that the zoo had "made public statements of regret on what's happened, and I thank them for taking it seriously".

Americans may have been surprised by the speed and volume of the fury on behalf of the kiwi - but New Zealand is unusually dedicated to the welfare of its unique birds.

The country's early breakaway from other land masses means that it has no native land mammals, and is instead populated by an array of birds. Many are now endangered due to non-native predators, against which there are ongoing national campaigns. The kiwi holds a special place in the hearts of New Zealanders. It is considered a taonga (cultural treasure) by Māori.

Pāora, the Zoo Miami bird, was hatched in the US as part of a breeding programme.

The zoo had begun charging guests $25 (£20) for a "kiwi encounter" to meet the bird. In a video posted to the zoo's social media, a handler cuddles Pāora, scratching his head and showing him off to a group of visitors, who feed him worms. "He loves being pet, he's like a little dog and he loves his head being petted," they say.

One viewer immediately launched a petition entitled Help Save This Mistreated Kiwi, arguing that the bird was "subjected to bright fluorescent lighting four days a week, being handled by dozens of strangers, petted on his sensitive whiskers, laughed at, and shown off like a toy".

Within less than a day, it had received more than 9,000 signatures. Some called for New Zealand's prime minister to intervene directly with the US ambassador. New Zealand's Department of Conservation stepped in on Tuesday, issuing a statement saying: "We would like to thank everyone who has raised concerns about Pāora." It added that it would be "discussing the situation with the US Association of Zoos and Aquariums".

Less than 24 hours later, Pāora was returned to darkness and the "kiwi encounter" events ended with immediate effect, the zoo said. "We listened to everyone who wrote to us - and there were a lot," Magill said.

The zoo said it was "deeply sorry" and that the kiwi encounter "was, in hindsight, not well conceived".

Australian woman, 95, dies after allegedly being Tasered by police officer

Mostafa Rachwani

A 95-year-old great-grandmother allegedly Tasered by a police officer at an aged care home in Australia has died in hospital. The officer has been charged with three offences.

Senior constable Kristian White, 33, is due to appear in court in Cooma, New South Wales, on 5 July for the offences of assault occasioning actual bodily harm, common assault and recklessly causing grievous bodily harm, which can carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison.

Clare Nowland was allegedly Tasered by police after she was found armed with a steak knife in her home at Yallambee Lodge aged care facility in Cooma.

At a press conference yesterday, the New South Wales police commissioner, Karen Webb, said Nowland's family had been informed of the charges relating to what she described as a "nasty incident".

The dementia patient sustained critical injuries including a fractured skull in the incident.

Webb, who has refused to release bodycam footage, said she would not view it herself until investigators had finished gathering the evidence.

"This has been traumatic for everyone in the police force," she said. "The community of New South Wales have trust in their police force … this is one incident out of over two million calls for assistance we get every year."

Webb said the charges against White could be upgraded.

She defended suspending the officer from duty without pay rather than sacking him, saying people were innocent until proven guilty.

"He's afforded the same opportunity as any other resident and his employment will continue to be reviewed, but at the moment he's still suspended," she said.

NSW police minister Yasmin Catley said: "On behalf of the NSW government, I would like to express my sincere condolences to the Nowland family for the loss of their dearly loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

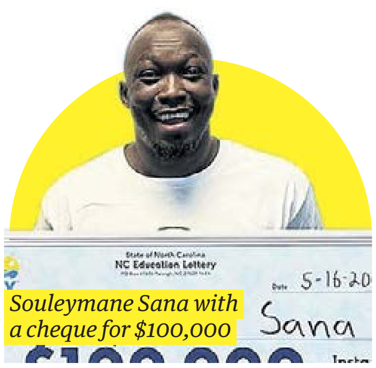
"Our sympathies and thoughts are also extended to the community of Cooma, Mrs Nowland's friends, as well as the residents and carers at Cooma Yallambee Lodge."



▲ *Clare Nowland sustained critical injuries, including a fractured skull*

US lottery winner to use cash to teach Malian children dancing

Ramon Antonio Vargas



Souleymane Sana with a cheque for $100,000

A man who moved to the US from Mali and won a six-figure lottery prize plans to invest in supporting schoolchildren in his war-torn home country.

"This was my dream," Souleymane Sana said of being in a position to help schoolchildren in Mali, according to lottery administrators. "That was one of the main reasons I bought that ticket. [It] was to be able to keep helping them."

Sana, 39, lives in New Bern, North Carolina, and works as a dance instructor. He bought a North Carolina Education Lottery scratchcard in a convenience store. It won him $100,000 (£80,500), reduced to $71,259 after state and federal taxes, officials said.

Many winners of lottery prizes of that size often talk about treating themselves, paying bills or putting the money into savings.

But when Sana went to the lottery headquarters to collect his winnings, he spoke about how he had started a group dedicated to preserving traditional Malian music and dance and planned to use his winnings to build classrooms and a centre dedicated to teaching children dance.

"I love to dance, and I want to teach the children in Mali to love it, too," he said in a statement.

"I'm going to keep doing my best to help build more … for the children in Mali. That is the thing that makes me really happy."

Mali has been destabilised since 2012, when a military uprising overthrew President Amadou Toumani Touré's government. Militants seized on the resulting power vacuum, mounting an insurgency capitalising on ethnic grievances, poor governance, corruption and poverty.



◀ *Members of the Russian Volunteer Corps near the Ukrainian border after withdrawing from Russia*
PHOTOGRAPH: VIACHESLAV RATYNSKYI/REUTERS

Wagner chief warns of revolution after 20,000 of its fighters die in Bakhmut

Julian Borger
Kyiv

The head of the Wagner mercenary force has said that 20,000 of its fighters have been killed in the battle for the Ukrainian city of Bakhmut, and warned that Russia could face another revolution if its leadership did not improve its handling of the war.

Yevgeny Prighozin said 20% of the 50,000 convicts Wagner had recruited, and a similar number of its regular troops, had been killed over several months in the fight for Bakhmut.

Prigozhin pointed to the social disparity underlined by the war, with the sons of the poor being sent back from the front in zinc coffins while the children of the elite "shook their arses" in the sun.

"This divide can end as in 1917 with a revolution," he said in an interview posted on his channel on the Telegram messaging app. "First, the soldiers will stand up, and after that their loved ones will rise up. There are already tens of thousands of them - relatives of those killed. And there will probably be hundreds of thousands - we cannot avoid that."

Prigozhin is known as "Putin's chef" because he once provided catering services to the Russian leader, but he said that "Putin's butcher" would be a more fitting nickname. He claimed his men now control all of Bakhmut - a claim disputed by the Kyiv government, which insists its forces still have a foothold in the ruined Donbas city - but he warned that Wagner would pull out at the beginning of next month.

Prigozhin was speaking after two Russian rebel militias, the Russian Volunteer Corps and the Free Russian Legion, had made a dramatic incursion into the Belgorod region along Ukraine's northern border, crossing into Russia with apparent ease, although the Wagner boss did not refer directly to the raid.

The Russian defence ministry claimed to have routed the raiding force, killing 70, but the militia leaders say they had only suffered two deaths. After withdrawing from Belgorod, Denis Kapustin, a commander for the Russian Volunteer Corps, told reporters on the Ukrainian border that the raid had demonstrated the fragility of Russia's defences.

"We can see that the military command as well as the political establishments of the Russian Federation are not ready for this situation," Kapustin said. "They have invested billions in strengthening their line but when it comes to action, everything falls apart, nothing is working."

Kapustin said the rebel fighters had finally withdrawn after two days once Russia was able to deploy tanks, but they would strike again.

"You will see us again on that side," said Kapustin, who introduced himself by his call-sign White Rex and is known for his far-right views.

Oleksiy Danilov, the secretary of Ukraine's national security and defence council, denied Kyiv's involvement, but said it showed that Moscow was not ready for the internal challenges it was about to face.

"We as an official state have nothing to do with these events," Danilov told the Guardian. "These are Russian citizens that are doing this as a means to express their attitude towards what is going on in Russia."

Military observers have said however it is highly unlikely that the Russian militias, which include far-right elements, could move men and machines across Ukraine and over the border without the acquiescence of Ukrainian military intelligence.

Danilov added that "Putin has yet to say a single word about it".

There were reports that the rebel militias had used US military vehicles to cross into Belgorod, which the Kremlin pointed to as evidence of heavy western involvement. Danilov denied any equipment had been supplied by the Ukrainian government.

Kapustin suggested it was equipment that had been captured by Russian forces and then bought by the rebels on the black market. "I know exactly where I got my weapons from. Unfortunately, not from the western partners," he said.

In Washington, John Kirby, spokesman for the national security council, said it was looking into the reports of US equipment, adding that it had made it clear to Kyiv it does not support the use of US-made equipment for attacks inside Russia.

Ilya Ponomarev, a Russian dissident based in Ukraine who claims to lead the political wing of the Free Russian Legion, said the incursion had three aims: to declare a corner of the country as "free Russia", to send a signal across Russia that the rebel movement was real and effective, and to divert Russian troops from the frontline to guard the border.

"There are 800km of the Ukraine-Russia border that are currently not covered by Russian military because the west says that Ukraine should not attack Russia," Ponomarev said.

Additional reporting **Artem Mazhulin**

China Moscow cements links with Beijing in trade accord

Amy Hawkins

Russia and China agreed to deepen investment in trade services, promote agricultural exports and boost sports cooperation, as Mikhail Mishustin, Russia's prime minister, signed a set of bilateral agreements yesterday during a visit to Beijing.

Mishustin is the highest-ranking Russian official to visit Beijing since the start of the war in Ukraine. In March, China's leader, Xi Jinping, visited Vladimir Putin in Moscow in a show of support for his "dear friend".

China has claimed to be a neutral mediator over Ukraine, but Beijing and Moscow have pulled closer since the invasion. Mishustin's visit, in which he met Xi and the premier, Li Qiang, came after G7 leaders called on Russia and China to be more transparent about their nuclear arsenals. On Tuesday, Russia's deputy foreign minister said the G7 statement was designed to "exert psychological and military-political pressure".

Ben Bland, the director of the Asia-Pacific programme at Chatham House, said the G7 statements "underlined the deepening geopolitical divide between China and Russia on one side and the US and its allies on the other".

Yesterday, Mishustin told Xi that Moscow and Beijing would push back against attempts by countries to use sanctions to "impose their will".

Bilateral trade between China and Russia has surged since the invasion. On Tuesday, Mishustin said it could reach $200bn this year, up from $190bn in 2022. Russian energy shipments to China are projected to rise by 40% this year, according to Interfax, a Russian news agency.

In the first three months of this year alone, trade between the two countries reached $53.8bn, an almost 40% increase on the same period in 2022. This month China's customs authorities added Vladivostok to its list of transit ports, effective from 1 June. It will be the first time the Chinese have had access to the eastern Russian port since the territory was ceded from the Qing dynasty 163 years ago.

Since the invasion of Ukraine, Russia has relied on China for political support. Yesterday, China's foreign ministry criticised plans for Nato to open a liaison office in Japan. Xi sees Putin as an ally against a US-led global order and has suggested the Ukraine conflict was provoked at least in part by the bloc's expansion.

China has warned against Nato extending "its tentacles to the Asia-Pacific". Bland said: "We are past the point where Japan or the US is going to do things because of China's critical commentary."

Li Hui, China's special representative for Eurasian affairs, is scheduled to visit Russia today. Last week he visited Ukraine to promote Beijing's mediation efforts, which western countries see as futile given China's close relationship with Russia.

Additional reporting **Reuters**

Section 48 Planning Act 2008 - Tillbridge Solar
REGULATION 4 THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (APPLICATIONS: PRESCRIBED FORMS AND PROCEDURE) REGULATIONS 2009
REGULATION 13 THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2017
NOTICE PUBLICISING A PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER (DCO) FOR Tillbridge Solar Limited

1) Notice is hereby given that **Tillbridge Solar Limited** of **111 Park Street, Mayfair, London, United Kingdom, W1K 7JF** (the "Applicant") proposes to make an application (the "Application") to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (the "Act") for the DCO defined above. The Applicant anticipates making the Application towards the end of 2023.

Description of the Scheme and its location

2) Tillbridge Solar (the "Scheme") will consist of:

a. the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panel arrays to generate electricity located on a "Principal Site" approximately five kilometres (km) to the east of Gainsborough and approximately 13 km to the north of Lincoln.
b. A Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) located on the Principal Site, allowing for the generation, storage, import and export of electricity to the national electricity transmission network.
c. Supporting electrical infrastructure on the Principal Site, including up to two substations (with a 400 kilovolt (KV) underground cable circuit interconnecting the two).
d. A Cable Route Corridor, comprising underground 400 kV cables connecting the Principal Site in West Lindsey, Lincolnshire, to National Grid's Cottam substation in Bassetlaw, Nottinghamshire.
e. Associated infrastructure, mitigation and enhancement measures/green infrastructure, and other ancillary works, for example, fencing, security, local grid connections, temporary access roads, permanent means of access, highway works, temporary works compounds and work sites.

3) The majority of the Scheme is located within the administrative boundary of West Lindsey District Council and Lincolnshire County Council with the grid connection infrastructure also located within the administrative boundary of Bassetlaw District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council.

4) The proposed DCO will, amongst other things, authorise:

- construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a ground mounted solar PV and BESS with an export capacity of over 50MW on the Principal Site;
- associated and/or ancillary works to facilitate the export/import of electricity from/to the Principal Site to/from the National Grid, including underground electrical cables connecting the Principal Site to the National Grid Cottam substation, up to two new substations located on the Principal Site, landscaping, biodiversity areas, access tracks, construction compounds and offices;
- the permanent compulsory acquisition and temporary possession (if required) of land and/or rights;
- the overriding of easements and other rights over or affecting land as well as the creation of restrictions where necessary;
- the application and/or disapplication of legislation relating to the Tillbridge Solar Farm; and
- such ancillary, incidental and consequential provisions, licences, property rights, permits and consents as are necessary and/or convenient.

5) The proposed Scheme is an Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") development for the purposes of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. The Applicant is, therefore, required to carry out an EIA and submit an Environmental Statement with the Application containing a detailed description of the Scheme and information about its likely significant effects on the environment. Information currently available about the likely significant environmental effects of the Scheme is set out in the Preliminary Environmental Information ("PEI") Report and summarised in a non-technical summary ("NTS") that form part of the consultation documents.

Statutory consultation

6) Consultation on the Scheme will take place between **30 May 2023** and **11 July 2023.**

7) Copies of the consultation documents, plans and maps showing the nature and location of the proposed Scheme – including the PEI Report and NTS, statutory consultation leaflet, project information booklet, feedback questionnaire, exhibition banners, maps and plans showing the overall location of the Scheme, the Statement of Community Consultation ("SoCC") and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document – will be available for inspection, free of charge, from **30 May 2023 until 11 July 2023** on the downloads section of our website **(tillbridgesolar.com/documents-library)**

8) Printed copies of the consultation leaflet and feedback questionnaire can be collected free of charge from the below locations. Copies of the full PEI Report and NTS, SoCC and project information booklet are available for inspection only (and to not take away). We recommend contacting the venues to check the opening times prior to visiting. All documents are available on a USB device, which can be requested by getting in touch using the details in this notice. USBs are limited to one per household.

Location	Opening times
West Lindsey District Council, Guildhall Marshall's Yard, Marshalls Yard, 13b Beaumont St, Gainsborough DN21 2NA	Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm)
Lincoln Central Library, Free School Lane, Lincolnshire LN2 1EZ	Monday to Wednesday and Friday (9am to 5pm), Thursday (9am to 6pm), and Saturday (9am to 4pm)
Gainsborough Library, Cobden St, Gainsborough DN21 2NG	Monday to Wednesday and Friday (9am to 5pm), Thursday (9am to 6pm), and Saturday (9am to 1pm)
Saxilby Library, St Andrews Centre, William St, Saxilby LN1 2LP	Tuesday (10:30am to 3:30pm), Wednesday (10:30am to 4pm) and Friday (10:30am to 1pm)
Retford Library, Churchgate, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 6PE	Monday to Friday (9am to 6pm) and Saturday (9am to 3.30pm)

9) A number of public information events will be held throughout the consultation period where the people can view the proposals (including printed materials and PEI Report) in person and meet the project team. The details of the events are as follows:

Venue	Date	Times
Online webinar (please visit our website or get in touch to register)	Wednesday 7 June	6:30pm to 8pm
Glentworth Village Hall, Stoney Lane, Glentworth, Lincolnshire, DN21 5DF	Wednesday 14 June	2:30pm to 7pm
Willingham Village Hall, High St, Willingham by Stow, Gainsborough, DN21 5JZ	Saturday 17 June	10am to 2pm
Sturton by Stow Village Hall, High St, Sturton by Stow, Lincoln, LN1 2AE	Thursday 22 June	1:30pm to 5:30pm
Corringham Village Hall, 10 Middle St, Corringham, Gainsborough, DN21 5QR	Friday 30 June	12pm to 4pm
Rampton Village Hall, Manor Grounds, Rampton, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 0JU	Saturday 1 July	10am to 2pm
Hemswell and Harpswell Village Hall, Maypole Street, Hemswell, Lincolnshire, DN21 5UL	Thursday 6 July	2:30pm to 6:30pm
Online webinar (please visit our website or get in touch to register)	Monday 10 July 2023	6:30pm to 8pm

10) These events provide an opportunity to find out more about the Scheme. Attendees do not need to register in advance to attend an in-person event. To register to attend a webinar, attendees should contact the project team (details below) or visit the website **(tillbridgesolar.com)**.

11) For further information or queries, please call 0800 046 9643 (free of charge); write to FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR (please write this in capitals, you do not need a stamp); email **info@tillbridgesolar.com** or visit **tillbridgesolar.com.**

To obtain copy documents

12) A full set of consultation documents can also be provided free of charge on a USB device upon request to the Applicant (limit one per household) on 0800 046 9643 (free of charge) or by email at **info@tillbridgesolar.com.**

13) If you would like a hard copy of the PEI Report a reasonable charge to cover printing and postage costs of £0.35 per page will apply. However, a printed version of the NTS can be provided free of charge.

14) All other consultation documents (excluding the PEI Report) can be made available in hard copy, large print, audio or braille format, free of charge upon request to the Applicant on 0800 046 9643 or by email at **info@tillbridgesolar.com**. Requests for translated summary documents will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Have your say

15) **Any person may comment on the proposals or otherwise respond to this publicity.** Any response or representation in respect of the proposed Application must (i) be received by Tillbridge Solar Ltd on or before **23:59 hours on 11 July 2023**, (ii) be made in writing, (iii) state the grounds of the response or representation, (iv) indicate who is making the response or representation, and (v) give an address to which correspondence relating to the response or representation may be sent. If you would prefer your comments to be anonymous please provide your postcode only.

16) A response can also be made by: completing a feedback questionnaire which can be requested from the project team in electronic or hard copy format free of charge, collected from a consultation event or aforementioned local information point; completing an online feedback questionnaire through the Applicant's website at **tillbridgesolar.com** or by submitting a response in writing and sending it to us by post at **FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR** (please write this in capitals, you do not need a stamp) or by email at **info@tillbridgesolar.com**.

17) Any comments received as part of this consultation will be considered by the Applicant and any of its appointed agents with respect to the further development of the Scheme and Application. Responses will form the basis of a consultation report that will be one of the factors taken into consideration by the Secretary of State when deciding whether the Application can be accepted for examination. Therefore, in providing any comment, it should be borne in mind that the substance of it may be communicated to others as part of that consultation report.

18) However, we will request that personal details are not placed on the public record. Personal details will be held securely in accordance with the relevant data protection legislation and will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and the development of this Scheme and, except as noted above, will not be disclosed to any third parties. A copy of the Scheme's Privacy Policy can be found at: **https://tillbridgesolar.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Tillbridge-Solar-Privacy-Policy.pdf**

19) For further information or queries, including in respect of the consultation documents, plans and maps, please call 0800 046 9643 (call free of charge); write to FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR (please write this in capitals, you do not need a stamp); email **info@tillbridgesolar.com** or visit **www.tillbridgesolar.com**.



▼ *A young player at the Dragones de Lavapiés club in the shirt of Real Madrid's Vinícius Jr*
PHOTOGRAPH: PABLO GARCÍA SACRISTÁN/THE GUARDIAN

'I never felt I was from here'

Abuse of footballer forces Spain to confront racism

Sam Jones
Madrid

A little after 5pm on Tuesday, a young boy in a Real Madrid strip trotted on to a damp neighbourhood football pitch in the Spanish capital, oblivious to the racism flung at the man whose name he wore on his back and to the national and international debate it had generated.

"We haven't told him about the Vinícius thing yet," said Mohamed's mother, Milene Dos Santos. "If he asks, then we'll tell him. He's only seven, but he'll need to be prepared for what's to come."

It appears the events of the past few days have been too much for many, far older, Spaniards to take in, too. The abuse hurled at Real Madrid's Brazilian winger Vinícius Júnior during a match against Valencia on Sunday has resulted in three arrests. Four other people, meanwhile, have been arrested in connection with a dummy dressed in the player's shirt that was hung from a bridge in the Spanish capital.

The 22-year-old footballer, who was reduced to tears by the latest racist aggressions, said his treatment was proof of just how thoroughly racism had permeated La Liga and Spanish society.

"I'm sorry for those Spaniards who disagree, but today, in Brazil, Spain is known as a country of racists," he said after the match.

His words were echoed by Brazil's president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who called on Fifa and La Liga officials to take "serious measures", adding: "We cannot allow fascism and racism to seize control of football stadiums."

Those charges have forced Spain's political leaders to position themselves on the issue of racism as people go to the polls in regional and municipal elections on Sunday. The Socialist prime minister, Pedro Sánchez, said "hatred and xenophobia should have no place in football or in our society". Alberto Núñez Feijóo, the leader of the conservative People's party, said racism and sport were "totally incompatible" but added: "Spain is not a racist country in any way."

The campaign-trail platitudes and denials felt rather remote to some of those gathered around the pitch where Mohamed and his teammates were training in Lavapiés, the diverse Madrid neighbourhood where African and Bangladeshi shops and restaurants rub up against hipster coffee shops. Their neighbourhood club, Dragones de Lavapiés, fields 20 teams made up of about 400 players from more than 50 countries.

Dos Santos, who was born in Portugal to parents from Cape Verde but has lived in Spain for 30 of her 32 years, said she had grown up with all manner of microaggressions, from people touching her hair to repeated questions as to why she spoke such good Spanish. "It's a burden I've carried since I was a kid," she said. "I grew up here but I've never felt like I was from here."



Vinícius Jr spoke out about racism

She and her husband, Ibrahim Ndao, who was born in Senegal, said they were not surprised about the abuse Vinícius had suffered.

"There's systemic racism in Spain and I hope what's happened opens people's eyes to it," she said.

The Dragones de Lavapiés exists to defend and promote diversity and to fight racism and stereotypes. Its president, Dolores Galindo, said while its players and their families had experienced racism on a daily basis, that racism still went unseen by much of Spanish society.

"If you're a white person and you've never experienced it personally, you don't believe in racism," said Galindo, who is white. "Until you spend a lot of time with kids of colour - especially African kids - you don't realise just how often things happen to them."

According to a survey last year, 25% of Spaniards aged 15-29 (the majority of them male) held clearly racist or xenophobic views, with most of their racial hatred directed at Gypsies and people from sub-Saharan Africa and Morocco.

None of this comes as a surprise to Okba Mohammad, a 24-year-old Syrian journalist who has lived in Spain since fleeing his hometown of Daraa during the Russian-backed offensive there five years ago.

"Spain is obviously a racist country," he said. "There's institutional racism, but there's also racism because of the lack of anti-racist education. There are a lot of people who are racist without knowing it or people who are racist because they want to be racist."

Mohammad thinks the poisonous events in Valencia's Mestalla Stadium will soon fade from the public discourse. "But the people who won't forget it are the people of colour who suffer racism and report it every day."

Swiss court clears Islamic scholar Tariq Ramadan of rape charges

Angelique Chrisafis
Paris

The prominent Swiss academic and Islamic scholar Tariq Ramadan has been acquitted on charges of rape and sexual coercion against a woman in Switzerland 15 years ago.

The lawyer for the complainant immediately announced that she would appeal. The woman, a Swiss convert to Islam, had told the court she was raped on 28 October 2008 in a Geneva hotel. Ramadan, 60, who has advised successive British governments on Islam and society, had denied the charges.

He told the court he wanted to fight against what he called "lies and manipulation" and said he had "never sexually assaulted anyone".

During his final statement in court, Ramadan had asked not to be tried on his "real or supposed ideology" and urged the judges not to be "influenced by the media and political noise". He said: "Forget I'm Tariq Ramadan."

Ramadan was a professor of contemporary Islamic studies at the University of Oxford before taking a leave of absence in 2017 when rape allegations were made against him by several French women, in what was seen as the biggest repercussion of the #MeToo movement in France. He has also denied those allegations, which could go to trial in Paris at a later date.

He left Oxford in 2021 by mutual agreement, on the basis of early retirement on grounds of ill-health. He told the court that he had multiple sclerosis.

The Swiss complainant said she had faced threats and therefore wished to be known under the assumed name of "Brigitte" during the trial. She told the court she had feared she would die during the alleged attack. "I was beaten … and raped," she said.

She said she had met Ramadan at a book signing in Geneva and later at a conference. A few months later they met for coffee at his hotel after a conference.

Ramadan was acquitted of three counts of rape against Brigitte in his hotel room and one count of sexual coercion. He had been accused of subjecting her to brutal sexual acts as well as beatings.



▲ *Tariq Ramadan after a Geneva court acquitted him of rape charges*

shawbrook

Trustpilot

Tell your savings to get off their AER

Don't let that old lump sum waste away.
Save smarter not harder with Shawbrook.

Make your move at
shawbrook.co.uk

Scan me
for further
information

FSCS
Protected

SAVINGS CHAMPION
2023 AWARDS

Shawbrook Bank is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority (Financial Services Register number: 204574).

FTSE 100	All share	Dow Indl	Nikkei 225	£/€	£/$
-135.85	-71.56	-247.97	-275.09	1.1489	1.2366
7627.10	4156.82	32807.54	30682.68	-0.0036	-0.0057

Business

Fashion and budget food boost M&S profits by 21%

Sarah Butler

Strong sales of denim, dresses and office wear, with more affordable food, have lifted profits at Marks & Spencer, with the retailer promising to restart dividend payments for the first time since the pandemic.

M&S plans to restore a "modest" annual payment to shareholders, starting with an interim dividend in November, after underlying pre-tax profits rose by 21% to £476m in the year to 1 April, with sales increasing 9.6% to nearly £12bn.

The news sent shares up nearly 13%, lifting the company's market value above that of its online grocery partner Ocado for the first time in five years. Ocado, once seen as the future of food retail, is expected to drop out of the FTSE 100 index of leading companies when it is updated next week.

Performance at M&S was boosted by clothing sales, with casual dresses up 40%, chinos up 25% and the pricier Autograph range, which includes suits and formalwear, up 40%. The disappearance from high streets of Gap and Topshop left an opening for M&S to grow its share of the denim market, from less than 10% to 13%.

The company said it had made changes to its ranges, taken a hit on profit margins to hold down prices relative to rivals, and improved styles. Sales of its Remarksable budget food range increased by 40% during the year as M&S tried to reduce the impact of soaring inflation on basics such as bread, butter and milk. Its shares closed last night up by nearly 13%.

M&S last paid a dividend in January 2020. It saved £210m by scrapping the payout during the first lockdown, telling investors it needed to conserve cash to trade through the pandemic.

Its chief executive, Stuart Machin, said the number of clothing and food items sold had risen, in contrast to many retailers, helping to increase market share.

Machin said the government was rightly "asking questions and thinking responsibly" about what had been driving food inflation higher. He said he had not seen evidence of "greedflation" – where companies increase profit margins by raising prices unnecessarily high.

He said: "The inflation we have had was driven by commodity prices, energy prices and wage inflation, which is still really significant throughout the whole supply chain. It has hit us as a retailer more than we have ever experienced."

The company also warned of a challenging year ahead, saying it expected a modest rise in sales and a fall in profits of up to £10m as costs increase. It expects to spend £100m more on pay and £50m on energy.

Machin said the retailer was likely to take a further hit on margins to protect shoppers from cost increases, which he expected to continue into the second half of the year, although inflation was likely to ease.

Inflationary pressures would be offset by cost-saving measures such as providing facilities for no-contact returns and more automated tills.

The group closed six full-line stores and two discount outlets over the past year. This year it plans to close 10 stores, already announced, and relocate 10 more.

Pre-tax profits fell by nearly 8% to £482m after losing one-off benefits from the previous year, including almost £60m of pandemic business rates relief. Clothing and homewares sales soared by 11.5% to £3.72bn, including a 4.8% rise in online sales. Food sales rose 8.7% to £7.22bn.

The Ocado Retail joint venture, which sells groceries online, however, dived £59m into the red. M&S made a loss of £29.5m from its share in the business, down from £13.9m profit a year before.

£476m

M&S's underlying pre-tax profits in the year to 1 April. But the retailer forecasts a challenging year ahead

Analysis **Yes to the dress** *Page 31* →

War on Ukraine 'causing rise in clean energy investments'

Jillian Ambrose



Russia's war on Ukraine has helped create a boom in clean energy investment that will significantly outpace spending on fossil fuels, according to the International Energy Agency.

A report by the IEA has found that clean energy investment is on track to reach $1.7tn this year as investors turn to renewables, electric vehicles, nuclear power, grids, storage and other low-carbon technologies.

Investment in coal, gas and oil will meanwhile rise to just above $1tn, the IEA said.

The Paris-based agency found that clean energy investments have been boosted by a variety of factors, including periods of strong economic growth and volatile fossil fuel prices as well as heightened concerns about energy security after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Fatih Birol, the executive director of the IEA, said: "Clean energy is moving fast – faster than many people realise. This is clear in the investment trends, where clean technologies are pulling away from fossil fuels."

He told the Guardian: "In very simple, but very striking terms, five years ago global energy investment was $2tn, of which $1tn was for clean energy and $1tn was for fossil fuels. Today, $1tn is for fossil fuels and $1.7tn is for clean energy. This is a dramatic shift which will have consequences for the energy markets and climate change. In my view, it's very exciting."



▲ *Fatih Birol of the IEA says there has been a 'dramatic shift' to clean energy such as wind, above*

PHOTOGRAPH: ADRIAN CAMPFIELD/ALAMY

The clean energy boom is particularly apparent in solar power investment, Birol said. "For the first time in history, the amount of investment going to solar is higher than the amount going to oil production. It may be symbolic but it is very important because it shows the tide turning," he said.

The IEA report showed that clean energy investment has accelerated well beyond spending on gas, coal and oil as governments become increasingly concerned about developing secure, homegrown energy sources.

However, the IEA report warned that Russia's war in Ukraine has also caused increased investment in upstream oil and gas, which is expected to rise by 7% in 2023 in a return to 2019 levels.

US tech sector at huge risk from curbs on China trade – Nvidia chief

Dan Milmo
Global technology editor

The US risks causing "enormous damage" to its tech industry if it continues restrictions on trade with China, according to the chief executive of the chipmaker Nvidia.

Jensen Huang said curbs introduced by President Joe Biden's administration, which include restricting the export to China of advanced chips made with US technology, had left the business with "our hands tied behind our back".

In an interview with the Financial Times, Huang said: "If [China] can't buy from … the United States, they'll just build it themselves. So the US has to be careful. China is a very important market for the technology industry."

Nvidia said last August that US officials had told it to stop exporting two artificial intelligence chips to China, although the company later announced the development of a product that would meet US government restrictions. Nvidia's chips are a key tool in the development of the large language models that underpin chatbots such as ChatGPT.

In October, the Biden administration published further export controls on the technology, including a measure to cut China off from certain semiconductor chips made anywhere in the world with US tools.

Senior US officials said many of the rules sought to prevent foreign firms from selling advanced chips to China or supplying Chinese firms with tools to make their own advanced chips.

Huang urged Washington to be "thoughtful" before imposing further restrictions on trade with China. The FT noted that his comments were made days before China announced a curb on using products made by the US chipmaker Micron in key Chinese infrastructure.

"If we are deprived of the Chinese market, we don't have a contingency for that. There is no other China, there is only one China," Huang said. He added that there would be "enormous damage to American companies" if they could not trade with China.

Huang, who co-founded Nvidia in 1993 and is worth an estimated $27bn (£21.8bn), said Chinese companies were starting to build chips to rival his company's products for AI, gaming and graphics.

Huang said: "If [Washington] is not thoughtful on regulations, they will hurt the American tech industry."

Severn Trent raises payout to investors to £261m despite fury over sewage leak scandal



▼ *Severn Trent's Clywedog dam and reservoir in Mid Wales*
PHOTOGRAPH: GREENWALES/ALAMY

Cash flow

£255m
Severn Trent's total shareholder payout in 2022. It's up to £261m

£3.9m
Amount company's chief executive, Liv Garfield, was paid in 2021-22

£14.7bn
Amount water firms are expected to pay investors by end of the decade

Joanna Partridge

Severn Trent has increased its dividend to more than £260m, despite growing public anger over payments made by water suppliers to their shareholders and executives, as companies come under increasing pressure to tackle leaks and pollution caused by the discharge of sewage into rivers and the sea.

The rise in the company's investor payout came as it reported a small increase in profit for the past year and forecast strong earnings growth for the coming year.

Severn Trent admitted that it, and the water industry, should have "acted faster" and given more attention to sewage discharge into waterways.

The company said it had made improvements to the amount of water lost through leaks and tackled complaints about water quality, persistent low pressure and pollution, but added that external sewer flooding was a "key focus area".

One of Britain's largest water companies, supplying customers in England and Wales, Severn Trent said it intended to raise its final dividend to 64.09p a share from 61.28p a year earlier.

The increase will take the total amount paid out by Severn Trent to its shareholders over the past year to nearly £1.07 a share, up from £1.02 a year earlier. The total payout amounts to £261m, up from £255m in 2022. The company said this was in line with its policy of raising dividends by at least the CPIH rate of inflation.

Britain's water companies will pay an estimated £14.7bn in dividends by the end of this decade, according to analysis for the Guardian, at the same time as making customers pay for new investment to stop the flow of sewage pollution into the country's waterways.

Severn Trent, which has more than 8 million customers, supplies water across a region stretching from the Bristol Channel to the Humber and from mid-Wales to Rutland in the east Midlands.

The FTSE 100 company, which has its headquarters in Coventry, reported a 0.5% increase in pre-tax profit to just under £509m for the year to 31 March, as a result of robust consumption by households and businesses.

Severn Trent is anticipating strong earnings growth this year thanks to a reduction of up to a fifth in the amount of interest it has to pay, which it believes should speed up further the following year as energy bills and costs linked to inflation come down.

Severn Trent's chief executive, Liv Garfield, who was paid £3.9m in the year 2021-22, said the company was helping up to 50,000 customers with their bills during the cost of living crisis and would be creating up to 1,000 jobs in the region in the next couple of years.

"We are expecting the biggest investment period the sector has ever seen, with a focus on water resources, improving environmental standards and on net zero," Garfield said.

The company has forecast that its capital investment could reach between £850m and £1bn during the current financial year.

It said that "corporate costs", which include directors' bonuses, rose by £500,000 to £8.7m last year. However, investors will have to wait until the company publishes its annual report this year to learn whether Garfield received a bonus.

This month, three water bosses said they would forgo their bonuses amid public anger over the dumping of sewage in Britain's rivers and water industry payouts.

Subscribe to me-time*

*Save time for just you - and you'll save a few pounds, too



Up to 34% off

There's so much to discover with every copy of the Guardian and Observer. Tune into new ideas by becoming a subscriber and save up to 34%. From just £2.03 per issue, you can enjoy our award-winning newspapers and magazines each week at your leisure with our range of packages; from weekend to every day.

Subscribe today by scanning the QR code or visit theguardian.com/paper-subs

Package	Newsstand price per month	Subscription rate	Saving
Every day	~~£93.60~~	£60.99	34% off
Six day	~~£77.13~~	£53.99	30% off
Weekend	~~£32.93~~	£24.99	24% off
Saturday	~~£16.47~~	£13.99	15% off
Sunday	~~£16.47~~	£13.99	15% off

Prices above are monthly. Savings calculated are savings made per month against the retail price.

The Guardian | The Observer

T&Cs: Open to UK mainland and NI residents aged 18+. The savings calculation is based upon the saving made per month against the retail price of all products included in the subscription package. The Guardian and Observer reserve the right to end this offer at any time. Details correct at the time of printing. For full subscription terms and conditions visit theguardian.com/subscription/terms.

Business
Retail



▶ Fashions from M&S go beyond basic T-shirts and tops to include well-cut women's jeans and, right, its floral midaxi tea dress

Yes to the dress

From denim to linen, M&S clothes feel stylish again



Jess Cartner-Morley

Fashion matters at Marks & Spencer. Clothes are an emotional purchase, and when M&S is successfully delivering clothes that its customers desire, it's a strong sign that the retailer is on the right wavelength. Food may be a much larger part of the business these days, but fashion is the bellwether.

The strong sales figures for the past year that M&S revealed yesterday have been driven not just by the below-the-radar basics of underwear and T-shirts, but in the fashion-forward categories of denim and dresses.

The Sienna straight-leg jeans with stretch, which sell for £22.50, are a current bestseller and illustrate how the store is finding the confidence to deliver denim that speaks to contemporary style without pitching too far into faddish trends. The Sienna jeans sit just below the natural waist and are fitted through the hips, but release from just above the knee to the ankle, for a silhouette that looks more up-to-date than a skinny jean without being challenging to wear. Sizing is inclusive (6-24) and well thought through (jeans and trousers come in five lengths).

Some of the best day dresses on the high street right now are on the M&S shopfloor. The floral Midaxi tea dress takes the simple high neckline, fitted bodice and sleeves cropped with a soft flounce at the elbow that is the signature silhouette of the Vampire's Wife Falconetti dress - beloved of high-profile women from the Princess of Wales to the actor Rachel Weisz - and gives it an everywoman spin in a ditsy floral print.

Meanwhile, the linen-rich button-through midi dress, in earthy shades of terracotta or deep green, could tempt a few minimalist Cos shoppers. Both of them are £39.50, which M&S has identified as a pricing sweet spot: expensive enough not to present as a throwaway, impulse purchase, without being prohibitive.

The demise of Gap and Topshop has given M&S an opportunity to win consumers who are interested in fashion but who are more comfortable shopping with a big brand than the small, Instagram-driven labels that now dress many online-only generation Z shoppers. The growing trend for brands to charge for returns is making shoppers value stores where sizing is reliable. The assurance that size 12 garments across the shopfloor will fit the same measurements is the kind of non-glamorous but sensible advantage of M&S that is proving a winner.

Another part of this story is luck. The style zeitgeist has moved in an M&S-friendly direction. After several catwalk seasons in which trench coats, shirting and well-cut trousers have been the hits of Milan and Paris fashion weeks, it is clear that fashion has shifted away from a carousel of quickfire trends and settled into a groove of timeless classics and understated separates. Linen, a fabric that has always been an M&S staple, is fashionable again.

There is still a perception gap for M&S to traverse. When I complimented a fashion industry friend recently on her ruched-sleeve oatmeal linen blazer, she showed me the M&S label with a "who knew?" raised eyebrow. It is currently available for £59. I wouldn't bet against it selling out.

£39.50

Cost of two key day dresses in M&S's new collection, which the retailer identifies as an important price point



Sienna jeans

Business view
Nils Pratley



After two decades of mistakes and false dawns, this recovery may be the real deal

Marks & Spencer has been a tale of false dawns for its shareholders for 20 years. Every apparent advance has been followed by a declaration from the boardroom that even vaster sums must be spent on overhauling warehouses, improving stores, closing stores, investing in food logistics, revamping clothing, or something else. It is, therefore, dangerous to say the long struggle against obsolescence has succeeded. But that's the way it looks.

Yesterday's annual pre-tax profit numbers depended on how you cut them: up a fifth in statutory form; down by 8% at £482m in "adjusted" variety; and better at an "underlying" level if one ignores last year's Covid business rates relief. In essence, all versions were above City forecasts. More significantly, management thinks it can get within £10m of the same underlying outcome this year, which is several grades above previous expectations. The shares gained 12% in a falling market and, at 184p, are at their highest level for 15 months. New-ish chief executive Stuart Machin's boast about "trading momentum" looks fair.

How's it been done? None of it sounds overly complicated. Machin's predecessor ditched many of the confusing in-house clothing brands to make way for deeper ranges of popular lines, supplemented by third-party brands; fashion columns on what M&S gets wrong have been notable by their absence recently. In food, the "remarksable value" slogan is teeth-grinding but there's something to be said for hooking shoppers with Tesco-priced butter, milk and eggs and getting them to pick up the fancier stuff at the same time.

It seems obvious now that physical shops can be an advantage, but it wasn't a bet everybody was prepared to make during the pandemic

Why didn't M&S try simplicity before now? The job is probably easier with the logistics operation knocked into shape, Debenhams has disappeared and a programme to shed excess floorspace has advanced. M&S still has about 240 '"full-line" stores, against the desired 180, but it has finally adapted to the growth of online. A business that can aspire to having 10% of the UK clothing and homeware market and 5% of the food market is a solid proposition when the basics are right.

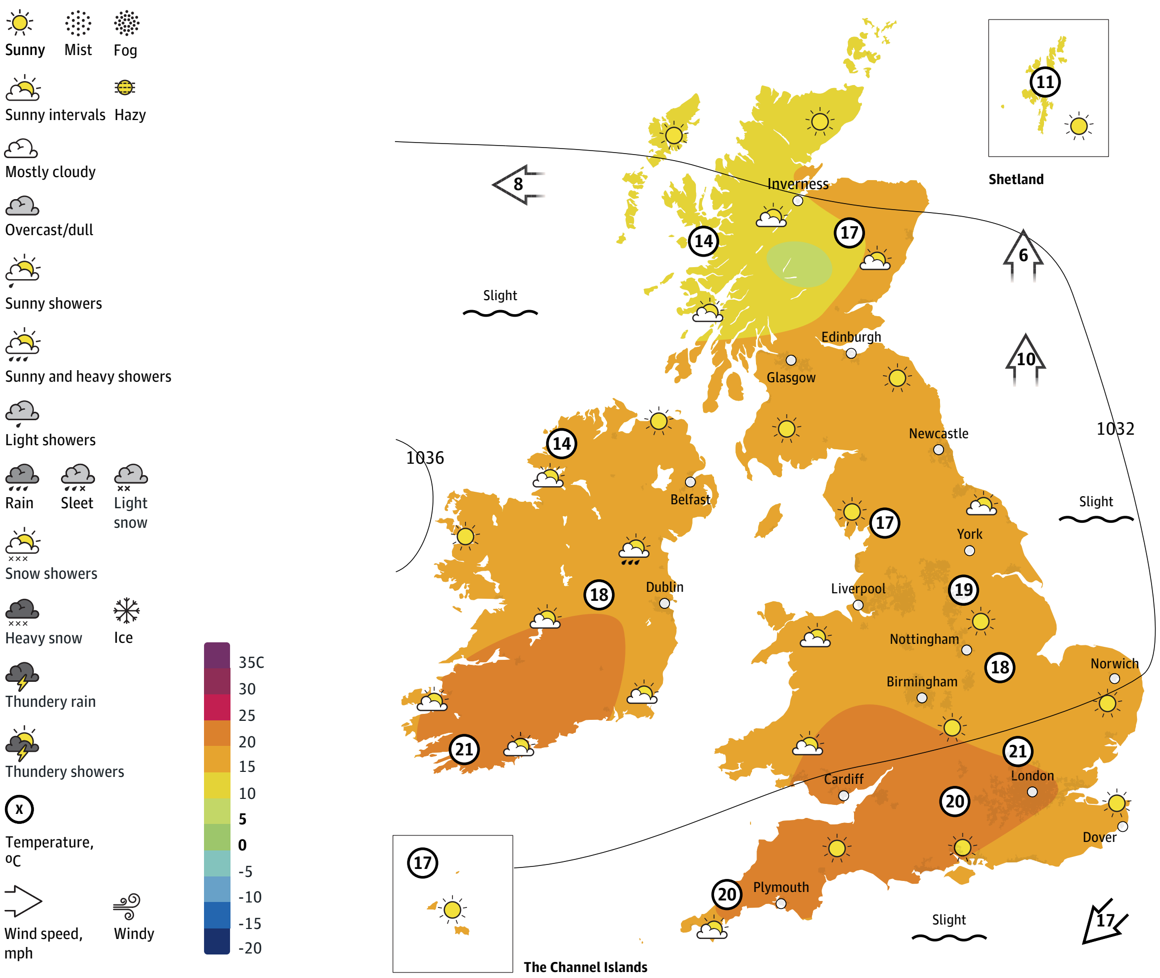
The current share price is a long way from a triumph from the point of view of long-term investors, however. It is only back at the level of the rights issue price in 2019 to fund the purchase of a half-share of Ocado Retail in the UK; and the restoration of dividends won't happen until November. But, in relative terms, M&S is making strides while others are going backwards. We gawked during Covid when Asos's stock market value was £4.8bn and M&S was worth just £2.8bn. These days loss-making Asos has plunged to £440m while M&S is at £3.6bn. M&S is now bigger than Ocado for the first time in years.

In that respect, the recovery is part of the triumph of flexible "omnichannel" retailers. It seems obvious now that having physical shops can still be a competitive advantage, but it wasn't a bet that everybody was prepared to make two years ago during the pandemic.

Experience says one should never underestimate M&S's ability to find fresh mistakes to make, and the outside consumer weather won't improve in the short term if interest rates are 5.5% by the autumn. But the gig does look easier from here.

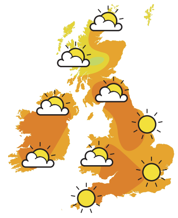
Weather
Thursday 25 May 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

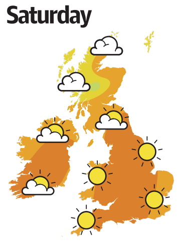


Forecast

Low 9 High 20
Tomorrow



Low 8 High 22
Saturday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

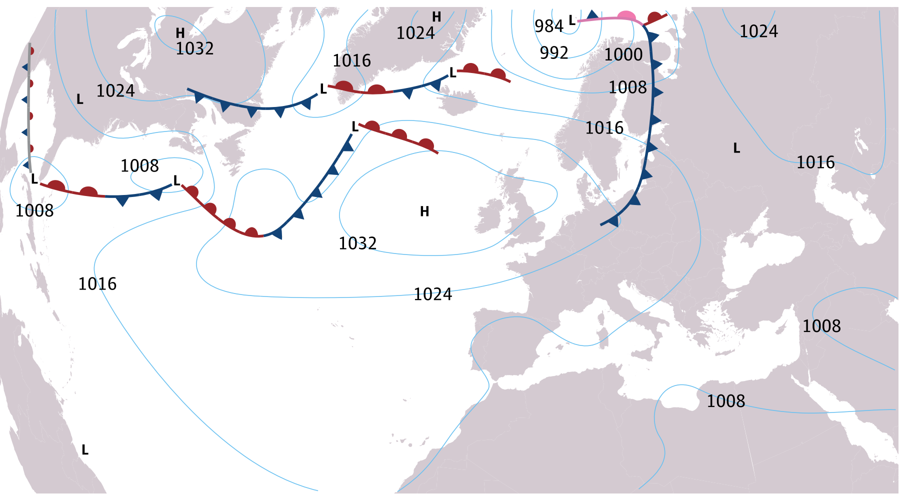
Latest	
23 May 2023	423.66
Weekly average	
14 May 2023	423.50
24 May 2022	421.20
24 May 2013	400.14
Pre-industrial base	*280*
Safe level	*350*

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs		Precipitation	Air pollution
London	8	21	5%	Low
Manchester	9	19	10%	Low
Edinburgh	7	19	0%	Low
Belfast	7	16	5%	Low
Birmingham	9	19	5%	Low
Brighton	8	17	0%	Low
Bristol	10	20	5%	Low
Cardiff	10	20	10%	Low
Newcastle	7	18	25%	Low
Penzance	12	17	5%	Low

Atlantic front



Cold front

Warm front

Occluded front

Trough

High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	0533	3.6m	1825	3.4m
Avonmouth	1118	10.6m	2327	10.6m
Barrow	0328	8.0m	1559	7.5m
Belfast	0329	3.4m	1600	2.9m
Cobh	0943	3.4m	2207	3.4m
Cromer	1037	4.3m	2341	4.0m
Dover	0321	5.8m	1546	5.8m
Dublin	0351	3.6m	1634	3.3m
Galway	0950	4.1m	2201	4.2m
Greenock	0422	3.4m	1711	2.8m
Harwich	0353	3.6m	1601	3.5m
Holyhead	0225	4.9m	1500	4.5m
Hull	1016	6.3m	2301	5.8m
Leith	0658	4.7m	1933	4.6m
Liverpool	0307	8.1m	1537	7.6m
London Bridge	0600	6.3m	1806	6.0m
Lossiemouth	0355	3.4m	1642	3.2m
Milford Haven	1032	5.6m	2248	5.7m
Newquay	0926	5.5m	2142	5.6m
North Shields	0741	4.3m	2028	4.1m
Oban	1001	3.0m	2210	3.2m
Penzance	0859	4.5m	2121	4.6m
Plymouth	0948	4.5m	2157	4.7m
Portsmouth	0333	4.1m	1615	4.1m
Southport	0227	7.8m	1457	7.3m
Stornoway	1145	3.6m	2341	3.8m
Weymouth	1010	0.6m	2225	0.8m
Whitby	0811	4.8m	2055	4.5m
Wick	0322	3.0m	1606	2.7m
Workington	0336	7.2m	1609	6.7m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0455
Sun sets	2059
Moon rises	0932
Moon sets	0142
First Quarter	27 May

AccuWeather.com

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	2140 to 0503
Birm'ham	2111 to 0457
Brighton	2056 to 0458
Bristol	2109 to 0506
Carlisle	2128 to 0447
Cork	2135 to 0527
Dublin	2134 to 0510
Glasgow	2140 to 0448
Harlech	2122 to 0504
Inverness	2150 to 0435
London	2059 to 0454
M'chester	2117 to 0454
Newcastle	2124 to 0442
Norwich	2100 to 0443
Penzance	2115 to 0523

Weatherwatch

The Arctic is turning increasingly foggy as a result of global heating. A recent study looked at Arctic weather records in the polar region from 1979 to 2018 and found more fogs are forming, especially near newly open areas of water.

The disappearance of ice changes the moisture content in the very lowest part of the atmosphere and this leaves a narrow layer of moist air at the sea surface. With so much extra water vapour at the surface, vast tracts of iceless ocean become extremely prone to fog.

This is a particular problem for new shipping routes opening up in the Arctic over the summer. As ice cover shrinks by about 14% each decade, sea traffic has increased over the past 20 years, with more commercial fishing trawlers, bulk carriers, tourist cruise ships and other vessels. And in foggy conditions, ships have to slow down to avoid submerged ice, which remains a major hazard.

Shipping also risks creating serious pollution, threatening the delicate polar environment. Heavy fuel spills can persist for weeks, or longer in cold seas, and marine wildlife is threatened - especially marine mammals vulnerable to underwater noise and collisions with vessels. **Jeremy Plester**

Around the world

Algiers	22	Lisbon	26
Ams'dam	17	Madrid	25
Athens	25	Malaga	23
Auckland	17	Melb'rne	16
B Aires	21	Mexico C	27
Bangkok	37	Miami	30
Barcelona	18	Milan	24
Basra	43	Mombasa	31
Beijing	26	Moscow	23
Berlin	21	Mumbai	33
Bermuda	26	N Orleans	30
Brussels	18	Nairobi	26
Budapest	25	New Delhi	33
C'hagen	17	New York	18
Cairo	33	Oslo	20
Cape Town	13	Paris	21
Chicago	17	Perth	18
Corfu	26	Prague	20
Dakar	28	Reykjavik	8
Dhaka	32	Rio de J	26
Dublin	17	Rome	24
Florence	25	Shanghai	26
Gibraltar	23	Singapore	31
H Kong	31	Stockh'm	16
Harare	27	Strasb'g	22
Helsinki	17	Sydney	24
Istanbul	22	Tel Aviv	27
Jo'burg	22	Tenerife	23
K Lumpur	33	Tokyo	22
K'mandu	25	Toronto	16
Kabul	25	Vancouv'r	21
Kingston	32	Vienna	22
Kolkata	34	Warsaw	23
L Angeles	20	Wash'ton	22
Lagos	31	Well'ton	16
Lima	24	Zurich	21

Cricket
England give Tongue a taste of Test set-up
Page 36 →

Boxing
Mia Billam-Smith: pleasure and pain of a fighter's family
Page 34 →





England's Lauren Winfield-Hill (centre left) and Ollie Robinson (centre right) have taken aim at the Australia sides led by Meg Lanning (left) and Pat Cummins (right)

GETTY IMAGES; AAP

Talking trash

Ashes verbals are all part of the appeal – sit back and enjoy it while you still can



James Wallace

May creaks into June. The first block of the County Championship is in the can, the sun's meek rays gather a little more strength and the damp English loam begins to sweat. So too the collective palms of the England cricket fan. A conjoined pulse quickens as thoughts, daydreams, hopes and fears become focused on that first ball at Edgbaston in three weeks' time. That's for the men. England's women get under way at Trent Bridge seven days later – a first five-day Test on home soil. Two Ashes ding-dongs side by side. Twice the action and for now, double the chatter.

We've had Ollie Robinson talk about handing Pat Cummins's boys a "good hiding" and Lauren Winfield-Hill declare that Meg Lanning's Australian side have "scars too", adding: "They can wobble, they can be fractured." The response from Australian quarters has been muted. Even Glenn McGrath was seen to heavily caveat his customary 5-0 prediction.

Emboldened by the success of the past year, Ben Stokes's team have been looser lipped than an England side might normally be. In a Sky Sports interview with Nasser Hussain, Stokes chuckled when reminded of Robinson's remarks. Nasser could barely hide his twitchiness, admitting the England side of his era wouldn't have dared to have a pop at the domineering Aussies – the thought had Hussain shifting in his seat.

In fairness, both sides have given as good as they've got over the years. "We have come to beard the kangaroo in his den and try to recover those Ashes," England's Ivo Bligh declared in 1882. Early exchanges were steeped in the struggle between empire and colony but as the series have stacked up, pre-series pronouncements have become Ashes folklore.

"This is war, same as usual," Matthew Engel wrote the day after the Australians' plane landed on English tarmac in May 1985. Allan Border had barely peeled off his flight socks and David Boon's walrus moustache was likely still lank with Castlemaine XXXX when the then Guardian's cricket correspondent mentioned the three letter "w word" in these pages.

The late Martin Amis would no doubt have rolled his eyes and railed against the cliche of the Ashes "phoney war" and the perpetual volleys served up. In truth, the comment churn can often be more likely to induce a sneer rather than a smirk, but to react wearily is to miss the point and, well, the fun. The slurs and slights are all part of the show – they heighten the rush of Ashes nostalgia and anticipation.

Pick a series at random and you can enjoy the barbs: from Jeff Thomson declaring he loves the sight of haemoglobin spilt on the popping crease before the 1975 bout, to Nathan Lyon announcing he was relishing the prospect of "ending careers" before the 2017 series.

No one is above getting stuck in – when the seemingly permanently good-natured Mark Wood is channelling his inner Kevin Keegan in declaring he would "love to stick one up 'em" in the run up to an Ashes opener, clearly anyone can get carried away.

Most players have got in on the act at some point and with time some pronouncements can seem ridiculous, prescient or even poignant. We should probably enjoy it while we can, not only because of the death knells of Test cricket but also, this year more than any other, because it is all going to be over in a flash.

The 2005 men's Ashes series unspooled like warm honey from a spoon during that summer. The Twenty20 and one-day international matches in June serving to feed narratives and build tension as the whole tour kept the country rapt as it wound towards the fifth Test at the Oval in September.

This time it will all be over by the end of July. The men's and women's contests are packed together – six Tests, three ODIs and three T20s in less than eight weeks. This will be the Ashes on warp speed – the speculation, selections, matches and analysis all bleeding into one big mulch.

'This is war, same as usual,' Matthew Engel wrote before the 1985 series

By the time August arrives it will be time for the Hundred to take centre stage in the prime months of the summer. You might well be riveted by the prospect of a representative of Welsh Fire throwing shade at London Spirit or a plucky Southern Braver declaring that "those Northern Superchargers have got no bottle" but, let's face it, you probably won't.

Time then to embrace the verbals that the Ashes inspire. The sheer longevity and ridiculousness of them. Go on, park that cynicism and relish Aussie goader-in-chief Stuart Broad's latest wheeze.

Broad, no stranger to stirring up some Ashes controversy, clearly loves the circus. In the past few weeks, Marmite's freshly yeasted brand ambassador has already chalked off the 2021-22 series as "void" and talked up a "new" delivery he's been working on especially for "Steve [Smith] and Marnus [Labuschagne]" that sounds remarkably similar to an outswinger. Less phoney and more baloney.

One man who would surely be loving Broad's act is Shane Warne, a fan of a pre-series "new" delivery unveiling himself. This will be the first Ashes series since Warne's death. There's that poignancy.

So sit back and let the phoney war wash over you. Read the stuff, watch the videos, debate the issues, keep tongue firmly placed in cheek, embrace the noise and enjoy the ride. It'll be over sooner than you think.

‘There will never be a time when I’m ready to watch Chris get punched’



◀ *Mia Billam-Smith will be ‘extremely vocal’ at a fight with ‘a lot of history’*
PETER FLUDE/THE GUARDIAN

The big interview
Mia Billam-Smith

Chris Billam-Smith fights Lawrence Okolie for a world title on Saturday night – but how will it be for his loved ones outside the ring?

Donald McRae



‘It’s always been his dream,” Mia Billam-Smith says on a tranquil morning in Bournemouth as she describes the motivation she and her husband, Chris, will feel on Saturday night in their home town. Chris Billam-Smith fights Lawrence Okolie for the WBO world cruiserweight title in a fascinating yet dangerous clash between two boxers who worked alongside each other for years under their joint trainer Shane McGuigan. Okolie has since left McGuigan’s gym and, at last, Billam-Smith has the chance to fight for a world title.

“We were lying in bed around four in the morning, when you have those silly chats,” Mia says as she remembers how she and Chris first shared their deepest hopes soon after they met in 2014. “I asked him: ‘If you were on your deathbed, what would be the one thing in your life you would want to have achieved?’ For me my No 1 goal was to be a mum. I was desperate to start a family. Chris said: ‘I want to be world champion. If I’ve done that, then I’m going to be happy on my deathbed’.”

Mia is 32, like her husband, and that memory blurs with the reality racing towards them at the Vitality Stadium this weekend. “The fact that we’re here now, nine years on, is crazy. Chris is so focused on his goal but, a couple of times, he has said: ‘I can’t quite believe this is happening and we’re actually here.’ The stadium increased its capacity from 12,000 to 15,000 people and the fact that they’re all going to watch him is amazing.”

Amid the hype and intensity of boxing it is easy to forget the people who matter most to the fighters themselves. But an hour with Mia is a valuable reminder of how much the partners of professional boxers endure in their lonely role on the safe side of the ropes. They are there to support the fighter they love while trying to control their own fear and worry. It can be fraught but, as Mia says, it works best when they express their conflicted emotions to each other.

“Chris keeps saying: ‘Mia, you need to visualise the stadium and the people and the fight.’ He goes through each win, lose or draw scenario with me because that’s what he does to mentally prepare himself. A few weeks ago I was a bit upset and crying as I thought about the fight. I had verbal diarrhoea: ‘What if this happens? What if that happens? I can’t visualise it. It’s overwhelming.’ All my anxiety came out but Chris was calm. He said: ‘Come back to me when you’ve visualised it and you’re ready – because I need you to be ready.’”



▲ *Chris Billam-Smith used to share a trainer with Lawrence Okolie*

Mia scrunches up her face. “It’s hard, because I don’t think I’m ever going to be. It’s different for him because this is the path he’s chosen. But I don’t think there will ever be a time when I’m ready to watch Chris get punched in the ring.”

But the couple find a way. “We only have the conversation once,” Mia says, “but he’ll go through the worst scenario that can happen and talk through that with me. We’ll then consider the best scenario and what that will mean. He’ll put a positive into the worst case and explain how we will cope because Chris loves the sport and he’s in the best years of his life. For him, it’s a case of knowing he’s left no stone unturned.”

The worst outcome in boxing occupies terrain far darker and more perilous than sporting defeat. I explain to Mia that I was in Isaac Chamberlain’s dressing room after he and her husband fought 12 brutal rounds which pushed them both to the brink of exhaustion and damage during their European title bout last summer. Billam-Smith won but Chamberlain was wheeled away on a stretcher into a waiting ambulance.

Do they ever talk about the stark reality that, on Saturday, another ambulance will be ready to rush an injured fighter to hospital? “We don’t go into that much detail,” Mia says, “but you can be the best boxer in the world and still get caught with one good shot. So for us the worst-case scenario is that he gets hit clean with a shot he can’t ride. My worst fear is there’s a knockout in front of his home fans.

“But for Chris it’s just another fight. When the bell goes it’s just him and Lawrence in the ring. Chris has visualised the best and worst-case scenarios. That’s how he becomes so mentally strong and why his boxing acumen is so deep. So I don’t talk about hospital, absolutely not. I wouldn’t want to think about that.”

> *‘The worst scenario is he gets hit with a shot he can’t ride – a knockout in front of his home fans’*

Mia is bolstered by her conviction that their best outcome will occur. “I do get nervous but, by the time of the ring walk, I’m also in fight mode. I have full belief in Chris. He’s going to win and I don’t doubt his ability. Sometimes I get overwhelmed and anxious but I know Okolie. I’ve watched them sparring so I’m hoping my nerves won’t be as bad. The atmosphere and the size of the crowd will be the hardest part for me.”

In the buildup Okolie said: “Chris, I love you, but I have to get the KO.” This week Okolie added: “I’m going to devastate him.”

“The story of this fight is more complex than most,” Mia says. “There’s a lot of history. For a long time Lawrence has been the No 1 in the division. He’s always been someone Chris looked up to to beat but there was a stumbling block when Lawrence joined the gym. It meant Chris thought they’d never fight. He came to terms with that but for a long time he found it quite difficult.

“As an athlete you always want to try and beat the best. Okolie has always been the best. But they’ve shared the ring hundreds of times in sparring and, now that Lawrence has parted ways with Shane, it’s given Chris an opportunity to fight him for the world title. What better platform to do it on than in front of his home crowd?”

Billam-Smith’s nickname is The Gentleman – which is an accurate reflection of his character as he is different to most trash-talking boxers. But does he get edgy the closer he comes to fighting? “He’s actually very chilled. It’s only about four o’clock on the afternoon of the fight that things change. Some fighters like to have their wives close by – but I’ve never been in the changing room pre-fight. Chris will say goodbye to me and Frank [their son who turns one tomorrow] and that’s him going into fight mode.”

Mia laughs when I ask if she is noisy once the bout begins? “I’m extremely vocal. I get lots of texts from friends watching at home who can hear me. I also get abuse on social media. People say: ‘God, there’s that woman again, screaming.’ I just think: ‘Imagine if it was your husband in the ring?’

“A couple of fights before Chris comes out, I start to get a bit antsy and emotional. Usually I have a drink to calm my nerves but, this time, Chris has asked his family not to drink. He hasn’t drunk for nine years and he wants everyone to be totally present when he wins the world title. I’ll just have a small glass of wine to take the edge off. But we will be focused on him winning so we can soak it all up.”



‘I’m still hot-headed but I just don’t show it any more’

◀ *Michael Smith is ready for the Premier League playoff finals tonight*
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN

World champion Michael Smith reflects on his early life in St Helens and handling the additional scrutiny of fame

Jonathan Liew

Michael Smith’s throw is quick, fluid and deadly. He doesn’t hang around, and so nor will we. Let’s begin right at the start: Cherry Tree Drive in St Helens, where the riot vans roamed the streets and there were plenty of distractions for a teenage kid with a set of darts and a distant dream.

“There was fighting, we had a lot of users in the street, so there were lots of drugs raids and stuff,” he remembers. “Of course I had a lot of friends that were users, friends who did stuff. But then I got into darts. So it was either stay in and practise, or go out and do stupid stuff. I left when I was 23, so I’ve not been there for nine years. It wasn’t the greatest of places, but it’s still home.”

Are great darts players born or made? Smith has a theory about this. His first love was rugby league; he remains a massive St Helens fan. But even though his family were in the pub trade and he grew up around all the traditional pub sports – dominoes, darts, snooker – he never showed the slightest interest himself. He admits he still finds darts “a bit boring to watch”.

Then one morning he fell off his bike, broke his hip and rugby was off the menu. Sat in the pub watching his dad practise, he asked to have a go. “I instantly fell in love with the game,” he says. “That’s why I think I was born to do it.”

And when Smith is in full flow, he can make darts look like the easiest thing in the world. The strong, set stance; the smooth flow of the arm, the 180s that float from his hand like music. Smith has long been talked about as one of the most naturally gifted talents in the sport. But until six months ago, it was a talent unfulfilled.

Nine major finals had come and gone. Only in November last year did it all begin to come together:

‘I wanted to be the centre of attention, I wanted people to sing my name. It’s part of the job’



▲ *Smith kisses the Sid Waddell Trophy after his world title triumph*

a first major at the Grand Slam, then world champion and world No 1 for the first time. The nine-dart leg he hit in that final against Michael van Gerwen – in which Van Gerwen also hit eight perfect darts – was replayed across the globe. At the age of 32, Smith had finally achieved the destiny many had written for him.

But Smith’s first few months as the sport’s hottest new property did not go entirely to plan. There were high-profile exits at the Masters and the UK Open and it took him until April to win his first ranking event. A mixed start to the Premier League raised the possibility of missing out on the top four and the playoffs.

The extra scrutiny and outsized commitments of a world champion were beginning to take their toll on his family life. Smith was discovering what many first-time world champions discover: that this is a very different sport when the target is not in your eyeline, but on your back.

“It was my fault,” he says, sitting in the restaurant of a London hotel, just a short walk from where the Premier League finals will take place. “I’m telling myself I’ve got to play like a world champion. Putting that added pressure on myself. I met Phil Taylor at an exhibition in Germany and asked how he dealt with it. He just said: ‘Learn the word no.’ That’s not me. I say yes to everything. I wanted to be the centre of attention, I wanted people to sing my name, I wanted people to like me. It’s part of the job. If you don’t want it, don’t win it.”

I ask Smith who the current best player in the world is. “Gerwyn Price,” he says. “I know on paper it’s me, but at the moment Gerwyn is showing it with his averages.” This is not something you would ever catch the ultra-aggressive Price or Van Gerwen admitting. But Smith is built differently: less alpha, less egotistical, less motivated by clout. Above all, he has learned that he plays his best darts when he remembers not to care so much. This is why, for example, he spurns the mind games that so many of his rivals adore.

“Van Gerwen’s the prime example,” he says. “He’ll start talking to you the day before you play him. My first world final [in 2019], I was with my oldest boy, and we’d ordered everything off the room service menu. So we’re tucking away, and then Michael FaceTimed me, saying: ‘You can’t sleep!’ I’m trying to spend time with my son, and he’s sending me messages. And it worked. He beat me 7-3. I just want to get on with it. I don’t want to win by cheating, I don’t want to win by antics, tactics, anything.”

In order to win, first Smith had to learn to lose. During that first world final, he broke his hand after punching a wall in anger. After losing his second to Peter Wright last year, he tearfully admitted to his father that he felt he would never win again. But becoming a champion at last has granted him a certain freedom.

“Now I’m a world champion and world No 1 I could happily retire after this interview,” he says. “I’m still hot-headed, I just don’t show it any more. I know when to breathe. I’ve thrown three bad darts, no one’s died. If I win, I win. If I lose, I go home to see my kids, and I’ve won.”

This sense of perspective is what continues to make Smith one of the most dangerous players in the sport. And recent weeks have seen something of a resurgence: three consecutive nightly wins in the Premier League to ease him into tonight’s playoffs, a season bubbling menacingly to a peak. “It’s once you start getting that feeling,” he says.

“Last year I won seven events in a row, and that’s where you feel untouchable. Hopefully I can find it again here, get ready for the Matchplay [in July], and then I could be the only person to hold all three in one year.”

He lives just outside St Helens now, in the Cheshire countryside, with a farm full of animals and a seven-foot wall around it to maintain his privacy. The hunger is still there, and he dreams of playing until 50, but already this game has taught him to make his peace with uncertainty.

“The minute I fall out of love with this game, I’ll call it a day,” he says. “I can’t see it happening, but if I lose tomorrow and enough is enough, I’ll go and find something else. I’ll invest the money from winning the worlds in something smart. The peace in me comes from knowing that when I go home, I’ve won no matter what.”

▼ *Smith has long been talked about as one of the most naturally gifted talents in the sport*
ZAC GOODWIN/PA



Rugby union

‘No attachment’ – Jones has moved on from England tenure

Gerard Meagher

Eddie Jones has fallen out of love with England, insisting he has no emotional connection to the side he coached for seven years before his sacking last December.

Jones will be back in the Twickenham coaching box on Sunday for the first time since the Rugby Football Union fired him when he takes charge of the Barbarians against a World XV. Though he is relishing the return, Jones said he was unfazed about the sort of reception he will receive from the Twickenham crowd.

Steve Borthwick’s appointment brought little improvement to England during another disappointing Six Nations campaign and though Jones said he watched all of the tournament’s matches, he also initially said: “I don’t watch England.”

“I’ve been lucky enough to coach internationally, and when you go to a team I love the team I’m coaching, but then when I move then I don’t have any regrets, any bad feelings,” Jones said. “I want that team to do OK, but there’s no emotional attachment to that team any more.

“They’re just one of the six teams in the Six Nations – I watch them, I think about them like all the teams how I would coach them if I had that team, and then if we come up against them I’ve already got something in my head.”



▲ *Eddie Jones has returned to England to coach the Barbarians*

After his sacking – and shortly after he had been snapped up by Australia – Jones said he would not speak to his former employers should England face the Wallabies at this year’s World Cup. Asked about the prospect of running into the union’s chief executive, Bill Sweeney, on Sunday, however, Jones said: “I don’t hold any grudges against anyone. I have moved on. If they are not moved on that’s their problem, not my problem.

“I never worry about things I can’t control. I don’t control [the sort of reception I’ll get], so it’s no use even thinking about it. I had a great seven years here. Loved my time here and I’m looking forward to it. The sun is shining. It will be unbelievable.”

Jones has detailed the pain of being sacked by Australia in 2005 but said his dismissal by England did not evoke the same feelings. “Post-England I always knew there were possibilities.”

Jones was able to take the Australia job so quickly because the RFU did not include a non-compete clause in his contract. England and Australia could meet in the quarter-finals, but Jones’s World Cup thoughts are more occupied with tactical trends.

He was adamant it was not a barb at Borthwick’s England but Jones believes that “just kicking” will not be enough to win the World Cup. According to Jones, it was for that reason that his long-term plan to bring change to his England side brought short-term pain last autumn and justifies Borthwick’s claim that the team he inherited were “not good at anything”.

“It is true,” said Jones. “We were trying to build a team to win the World Cup. I don’t believe you are going to be able to win the World Cup by just kicking. I don’t believe you can. I can be proven wrong. But I think with the grounds as they are, you are going to need to play more positive rugby. Steve was right.”

Premiership may move 2025 final to aid Lions

The British & Irish Lions are close to receiving a significant boost for their 2025 tour of Australia with Premiership Rugby ready to bring its final forward to accommodate more preparation time for the series against the Wallabies. A historic agreement between the Lions and PRL requires final approval by various stakeholders, but if it is agreed it would end years of acrimony and improve the tourists’ chances of a first series win in 12 years.

It is understood discussions over the agreement have taken place for more than a year with the Lions’ chief executive, Ben Calveley, and his PRL counterpart, Simon Massie-Taylor, adopting a collaborative approach in contrast to the conflict that has surrounded recent tours. One well-placed source said the expected agreement is a welcome positive for rugby, beneficial for all parties, and an example of the promises for greater cooperation among the game’s stakeholders.

Pending approval, the finer details of the agreement, including commercial ventures between the clubs and the Lions, are expected to be announced next month to coincide with the two-years-to-go milestone, along with the final schedule that is likely to include a match against a combined ANZAC side featuring players from Australia and New Zealand. **Gerard Meagher**



LUCA BETTINI/AFP/GETTY

Front man Geraint Thomas finished safely to retain the Giro d’Italia leader’s pink jersey as Alberto Dainese bounced back from stomach problems to win stage 17 in a photo finish. Thomas, guided home by his Ineos Grenadiers team-mate Ben Swift, retained his 18-second advantage over João Almeida, with Primoz Roglic lying third, 29 seconds behind. It means the Welshman will spend his 37th birthday in pink when the race returns to the mountains today. **PA Media**

Cricket

Tongue licks his lips at prospect of Test debut

Ali Martin

Josh Tongue wondered if early retirement was calling following a rare shoulder injury that left him unable to feel his entire right arm. But now the Worcestershire seamer has been handed his first call-up by England for the one-off Test against Ireland next week.

Tongue, 25, has already been in the headlines this summer, becoming the first bowler to dismiss Steve Smith during the Australian’s pre-Ashes warm-up stint at Sussex. Though a borderline lbw decision, the spell still underlined the right-armer’s promise.

With Jimmy Anderson (groin strain) and Ollie Robinson (ankle soreness) unlikely to be risked in the four-day Test against Ireland that starts at Lord’s on 1 June, Tongue has now been added to the set-up and will compete with Chris Woakes, Matthew Potts and Stuart Broad for a spot in the final XI.

A product of the pathway at New Road, having started out with Worcestershire’s Under-10s when he was just six years old, Tongue bowls at an awkward pace and boasts 162 wickets at an average of 26 from his 47 first-class matches to date.

The newcomer is currently on the comeback trail from a side-strain but, amid an injury crisis that has seen Jofra Archer, Olly Stone, Jamie Overton, Brydon Carse all ruled out, and with Mark Wood possibly on paternity leave, he should be passed fit in the coming days.

That niggle pales into insignificance compared to the challenges Tongue has overcome in his nascent career, having missed 15 months of first-team cricket for Worcestershire between 2021 and 2022 due to a nerve problem in his right shoulder. It required two operations which, despite suggestions the injury may be career-ending, ultimately worked.

Speaking after the match against Sussex at New Road earlier this month, and still buzzing from his removal of Smith for 30, Tongue explained: “It was called thoracic outlet syndrome.

“I just couldn’t feel my whole right arm, I couldn’t feel the ball in my hand, my whole arm would go dead, my hands would go cold.

“It’s a very rare injury to have as a cricketer. It was a bad time but I’m feeling good now and I’m just glad to be back on the park and enjoying my cricket.”



Josh Tongue could make his England Test debut against Ireland

Playing the last three County Championship matches of the 2022 season saw Tongue called up for the Lions’ winter programme. And in February, faced with the unfamiliar conditions of Galle, he claimed eight wickets against Sri Lanka A.

Luke Wright, England men’s national selector, said: “We have been monitoring Josh for quite some time and he deserves this call-up. It will be a great experience for him to understand and get used to the environment.”

Tongue will link up with the England squad this weekend, with the four-day Test against Ireland serving as their final preparations for the Ashes series that gets under way at Edgbaston on 16 June.

Meanwhile, Ireland have called up the uncapped seamer Matthew Foster for the Lord’s Test following Conor Olphert’s injury setback. Olphert was progressing well in his recovery from a knee injury but the problem has resurfaced in recent weeks, meaning the 27-year-old will not be fit for the four-day Test.

Robins heads to Wembley looking for one more miracle

Coventry have spent much of his time in charge in chaos and without a ground but the Premier League still beckons

Ben Fisher



▼ *Mark Robins has led Coventry from League Two to being 90 minutes away from the Premier League*
RICHARD SELLERS/PA

On Coventry City's last visit to Wembley five years ago, the air conditioning on the team coach conked out en route, hardly ideal preparation for players and staff suited and booted in 33C heat for the biggest game of the season, if not longer. Most removed their ties and opened the collar on their shirts. Mark Robins debated taking his team off the bus but thankfully the iconic arch was on the horizon. For Robins, it represented just another hurdle to overcome, but small fry compared with the events that would follow. Regardless, it is the sort of hiccup Coventry could do without when they take on Luton Town on Saturday for a place in the Premier League.

Robins has grown accustomed to contending with adversity, be it groundshares, pitch problems or protracted takeovers since returning to the club six years ago, though a takeover by Doug King in January finally abated the sense of never-ending uncertainty. Coventry have played home games at Northampton, Birmingham and Burton over the past 10 years, at Burton last August because 65 rugby sevens matches across three days of Commonwealth Games action put paid to their pitch. Coventry were bottom of the Championship in October but ended the regular season fifth, their best finish since dropping out of the Premier League in 2001.

Robins has proved a master in coping with chaos and a miracle-worker of a manager. When he was reappointed by Coventry in March 2017, they were bottom of League One, 13 points adrift of safety. A month later an EFL Trophy final victory at Wembley, in front of more than 43,000 Coventry supporters, offered a reminder of the club's appeal, a glimpse into the future. At the start of that summer Coventry were without a chief executive and recruitment department but won an immediate return to the third tier, defeating Exeter City in the playoff final. Since then, they have finished every season higher than they did the last.

Michael Doyle, whom Robins made his first signing and named captain, recalls a conversation on his first day back at Coventry. "I vividly remember him saying: 'I'm getting a chief exec in, I'm getting the recruitment sorted,'" says Doyle, who retired last year. Robins also set about improving the gym facilities and making sure there was a dryer in the kit room, in between trying to shield his squad from mounting outside noise. "He was putting things in place on a weekly basis. He has built Coventry from the bottom up. For all he's done at the club, he's 90 minutes away from a statue of him going up outside the ground, and there are not many of those. He is just a brilliant manager."



Swedish striker Viktor Gyökeres has scored 22 goals this season

Robins, who last week signed a new four-year contract, quickly acknowledged Coventry's need to build bridges with an apathetic fan base. "Mark felt that after relegation and with all the ownership and ground issues that the gap had widened quite a lot," says the former Coventry defender Jack Grimmer, now of Wycombe. "The fans had become very despondent and attendances were down. He said: 'Make no mistake, if we have a good season and get things rolling in the right direction, the fans will come back because they are wanting to support the club.' The fans seemed to just be yearning for that positive vibe."

> *'Mark didn't just manage players, he managed the whole club. He was on top of everything'*

Robins introduced rules such as banning mobile phones in the changing room to encourage his players to foster relationships. He also wanted his players to be immersed in the community. Doyle cites building bonds with supporters' clubs. More than 1,500 fans travelled to Grimsby Town for their first away game in the fourth tier since 1959, a 2-0 win in which Grimmer scored, but it was not all plain sailing. A trip to Yeovil Town's Huish Park a fortnight later ended in defeat and with disgruntled fans shouting through the windows of the away dressing room.

Six months later almost 8,000 supporters went to MK Dons for an FA Cup fourth-round victory. Four months after that Coventry were toasting promotion in Leamington. "Mark said: 'Listen, we are going to take this club back to the Premier League,'" Doyle says. "I was like: 'Bloody hell, brilliant.' It was a big statement. A lot of people would have laughed at him at the time. We had just been promoted into League One and we were a million miles from the Premier League."

Those who have worked with Robins, the striker who played for Manchester United under Sir Alex Ferguson, speak of a focused character who exudes calm, commands respect and keeps his cards close to his chest. "If you had a good game on a Saturday, you came in on Monday morning and it was almost forgotten about," Grimmer says. "I remember speaking to him during the season. I had been playing well and about halfway through I just said: 'How do you think I'm doing, is there anything you think I can work on?' He said: 'Well, if you want me to blow smoke up your arse you've come to the wrong person – just keep doing what you're doing.'" Grimmer chuckles.

Robins walked into relegation battles at his previous clubs – Rotherham United, Barnsley, Huddersfield Town and Scunthorpe United – but his perception as a firefighter does him a disservice. He improves players and has turned Gus Hamer and Viktor Gyökeres into two of the most coveted prospects outside of the top flight. Another of their best players, Callum O'Hare, ruptured an anterior cruciate knee ligament in December. The influence of the assistant manager Adi Viveash, who spent nine years coaching in Chelsea's academy, should also not be overlooked. "Mark didn't just manage players, he managed the whole club," Doyle says. "He was on top of everything."

Robins says that when he returned to Coventry everybody had given up. He has since breathed life and belief into a club unrecognisable to the one he walked into.

He recalls the former England manager Graham Taylor telling him how stomaching a 17-point deduction at Rotherham in his first managerial job, which left the club fretting about relegation into non-league in 2008-09, would stand him in good stead for the rest of his career – even if it was difficult to compute at the time. "Looking back, he was spot on," Robins says.

Football In brief

Southampton

Swansea's Martin set to replace departing Sellés

Southampton are poised to announce Russell Martin as their new head coach having confirmed Rubén Sellés will depart after taking charge against Liverpool on Sunday, their final game of the season. A compensation package worth upwards of £400,000 is thought to have been agreed with Championship side Swansea City where Martin, the former Norwich defender and captain, has won admirers across the past two seasons. The 37-year-old Martin is expected to be joined at St Mary's by his assistant manager Matt Gill. A statement confirming Sellés would be leaving was released yesterday. It read: "The club wants to place on record its thanks to Rubén for taking on the managerial position at a difficult time for the club and for giving his all as we attempted to stay in the Premier League." **Ben Fisher**

PSV Eindhoven

Van Nistelrooy resigns over 'lack of support'

Ruud van Nistelrooy has resigned as manager of PSV Eindhoven before their final game of the season. The former Manchester United and Real Madrid striker had been in charge for one year at the Philips Stadium and won the Dutch Cup earlier this month. PSV will secure a second-place finish in the Eredivisie if they take a point from their last game at AZ on Sunday. A statement from the club said Van Nistelrooy, 46, did not feel he had sufficient support following several recent discussions about "internal affairs". Fred Rutten will take charge for the trip to Alkmaar. The statement read: "Van Nistelrooy reported this morning that in his opinion there was not enough support within the club to continue longer." **PA Media**

Scottish Premiership

Dundee United facing the drop after defeat

Dundee United are on the brink of relegation after Kyle Vassell's double helped Kilmarnock to a 3-0 victory at Tannadice which puts them in pole position to stay up. Coupled with Ross County's draw against St Johnstone, Dundee United are left needing a hugely unlikely turn of events on Sunday. Celtic fell to a 4-2 defeat at Hibernian. **PA Media**



▼ *Brighton's Julio Enciso lets fly for his first goal at the Amex Stadium*
NICK POTTS/PA WIRE

Enciso's firecracker confirms sixth spot for brilliant Brighton

Brighton **1**
Enciso 38

Manchester City **1**
Foden 25

David Hytner
Amex Stadium

Manchester City had already sewn up the Premier League title, their fifth in six seasons; a three-peat complete. They have a couple of finals coming up that you might have heard about. So what was their motivation here?

Brighton had confirmed their place in next season's Europa League – unless you believed that a 17-goal swing in two defeats against City here and at Aston Villa on Sunday was plausible. They had an outside chance of overhauling Liverpool for fifth place, although that would not have brought any tangible reward. Same question. What was their motivation?

The answer for City, perhaps, was to showcase their winning mentality, to maintain momentum for the historic challenge ahead. But, really, it boiled down to professional pride. Just as it did for Brighton, the desire to put on a show – even after all of the shows that both clubs have staged during seasons they would justifiably describe as epic.

What a game this was, the first half in particular a rip-roaring spectacle, the thrills seemingly every minute. It was when Julio Enciso's top-corner firecracker cancelled out Phil Foden's opener for City. What a goal it was from Enciso, the explosive climax to a patient and probing move.

Brighton carried the fight to City, perhaps more than any other club have done this season. They had 20 shots at the visitors' goal – no opponent has attempted more over the campaign.

There was a moment in the 72nd minute when Pep Guardiola came onto the pitch to return the ball for a City free-kick. He applauded with his hands above his head before sweeping it across with his left foot, the years rolled back. He exchanged a high five with his Brighton counterpart, Roberto De Zerbi, the respect between the pair obvious.

Guardiola was all smiles then. It would be a different story on 79 minutes when Erling Haaland had a goal chalked off by the VAR for a shirt tug on Levi Colwill. When the replay was shown on the big screen, Guardiola would rage at the fourth official. He ended up with a yellow card and a stinging post-match complaint, the gist of it being that if that was a foul by Haaland, then every action against him ought to be the same. It was not easy to agree with Guardiola; the pull by Haaland looked clear.

The occasion was shaped by the love-in between Guardiola and De Zerbi, the former having described the latter on Tuesday as "one of the most influential managers in the last 20 years." Wow. Guardiola would be effusive in his praise of De Zerbi after the game and for good reason.

What Guardiola likes about De Zerbi is his fearlessness, how his team risk the ball at the back to spring forward, their possession, their chance creation. It was stamped all over this latest performance, Guardiola forced to think creatively to have City in contention.

Guardiola started Rodri in central defence alongside John Stones – to counter Brighton's non-typical No 9s, Danny Welbeck and Enciso – with Rico Lewis at left-back; under orders, of course, to step up and inside. Guardiola wanted comfort on the ball and superior numbers in a flexible midfield set-up.

Brighton did what they normally do – quick, choreographed movements; all highly technical – and it was a fascinating, frenetic watch, the chances flowing from the outset.

Foden was a blur of silky left-footed touches and sharp turns, although it was with his unfavoured right foot that he found the breakthrough after Riyad Mahrez had released Haaland. The City centre-forward had previously blown two chances that he would have expected to score but now he passed to Foden, who danced inside and shot, a little scruffily. Jan Paul van Hecke might have cleared on the line. Instead he diverted the ball in.

By then, Welbeck had bent a free-kick onto the crossbar with Stefan Ortega well beaten and it was not alone along Brighton's early efforts.

Facundo Buonanotte exploded past two City challenges to work Ortega and then Enciso detonated his 25-yard screamer. He cut across the ball with his right boot; there was dip and swerve but overall just purity. Enciso could not have placed the ball more perfectly had he stood underneath the crossbar and used his hands. Welbeck had the ball in the net on 44 minutes only to be flagged offside and Foden headed inches off target at the other end. It was breathless.

It was a pity that Foden was forced off at the start of the second half; he had been in the mood. Ilkay Gündogan lashed past the far post while Cole Palmer, blasted at Jason Steele. Kaoru Mitoma flickered for Brighton while Pervis Estupiñán would zing a shot just wide. Then, there was Haaland, smiling in celebration – yet again – after Palmer had beaten Joël Veltman, to cross. It would soon be overtaken by exasperation.

11 games to go ...

(*See table on right of page*)
Tonight Man Utd v Chelsea (8pm)
Sunday (all 4.30pm) Arsenal v Wolves, Aston Villa v Brighton, Brentford v Man City, Chelsea v Newcastle, Crystal Palace v Nottm Forest, Everton v Bournemouth, Leeds v Tottenham, Leicester v West Ham, Man Utd v Fulham, Southampton v Liverpool

Brighton
4-4-2
Steele; Gross, Van Hecke●, Colwill, Estupiñán; Buonanotte (Veltman● 75), Gilmour (Mac Allister 52), Caicedo, Mitoma; Welbeck (Undav 75), Enciso (Ferguson 52)
Subs not used
McGill, Webster, Dunk, Ayari, Peupion

Manchester City
4-2-3-1
Ortega; Walker, Stones (Gómez 84), Rodri, Lewis; Gündogan, Silva● (Phillips 84); Mahrez, De Bruyne, (Álvarez 57) Foden (Palmer 51); Haaland
Subs not used
Ederson, Charles, O'Reilly, Robertson, Knight

Referee Simon Hooper **Attendance** 31,388

Results

Football

PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Manchester City **C**	37	28	5	4	94	32	+62	**89**
Arsenal	37	25	6	6	83	43	+40	**81**
Newcastle	37	19	13	5	67	32	+35	**70**
Manchester Utd	36	21	6	9	52	41	+11	**69**
Liverpool	37	19	9	9	71	43	+28	**66**
Brighton	37	18	8	11	71	51	+20	**62**
Aston Villa	37	17	7	13	49	45	+4	**58**
Tottenham	37	17	6	14	66	62	+4	**57**
Brentford	37	14	14	9	57	46	+11	**56**
Fulham	37	15	7	15	54	51	+3	**52**
Crystal Palace	37	11	11	15	39	48	-9	**44**
Chelsea	36	11	10	15	36	42	-6	**43**
Wolves	37	11	8	18	31	53	-22	**41**
West Ham	37	11	7	19	41	53	-12	**40**
Bournemouth	37	11	6	20	37	70	-33	**39**
Nottingham Forest	37	9	10	18	37	67	-30	**37**
Everton	37	7	12	18	33	57	-24	**33**
Leicester	37	8	7	22	49	67	-18	**31**
Leeds	37	7	10	20	47	74	-27	**31**
Southampton **R**	37	6	6	25	32	69	-37	**24**

Brighton (1) **1** **Manchester City** (1) **1**
Enciso 38 Foden 25 31,388

CINCH SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Celtic **C**	37	31	3	3	109	34	+75	**96**
Rangers	37	28	5	4	90	37	+53	**89**
Aberdeen	37	18	3	16	56	55	+1	**57**
Hearts	37	15	8	14	62	56	+6	**53**
Hibernian	37	15	6	16	56	58	-2	**51**
Motherwell	37	13	8	16	50	49	+1	**47**
St Mirren	37	12	10	15	43	58	-15	**46**
Livingston	37	13	7	17	36	58	-22	**46**
St Johnstone	37	11	7	19	39	59	-20	**40**
Kilmarnock	37	10	7	20	34	61	-27	**37**
Ross County	37	9	7	21	36	57	-21	**34**
Dundee Utd	37	8	7	22	38	67	-29	**31**

Aberdeen (2) **3** **St Mirren** (0) **0**
Clarkson 14, Shinnie 43 49

Dundee Utd (0) **0** **Kilmarnock** (1) **3**
Vassell 14 44, Cameron 83

Hibernian (0) **4** **Celtic** (1) **2**
Youan 52 80, Nisbet 75pen Bernabei 86og; Hatate 41pen, Oh 58; 18,171

Livingston (0) **1** **Motherwell** (1) **1**
Shinnie 84; Van Veen 3

Rangers (1) **2** **Hearts** (1) **2**
Cantwell 45, Sakala 47; Shankland 1, Kuol 90; 48,428

Ross County (0) **3** **St Johnstone** (1) **3**
Dhanda 54pen, White 69 Baldwin 90; May 24 51pen McGowan 90

COPPA ITALIA
Final Fiorentina 1 Internazionale 2

Cricket

VITALITY T20 BLAST
North Group: Northampton Worcestershire 196-9 (AJ Hose 61). Northamptonshire 181-8. Worcestershire beat Northamptonshire by 15 runs.

South Group: Canterbury Gloucestershire 113 (CDJ Dent 55). Kent 116-3. Kent beat Gloucestershire by seven wickets.

Taunton Hampshire 74 (C Overton 3-8, BGK Green 3-11). Somerset 75-2. Somerset beat Hampshire by eight wickets.

Tennis

ATP LYON OPEN (France)
Second round: S Baez (Arg) bt P Cachin (Arg) 3-6 7-5 6-2; **T Paul** (US) bt G Barrère (Fr) 7-6 (6) 4-6 6-3; **C Norrie** (GB) bt D Goffin (Bel) 6-3 6-4; **A Fils** (Fr) bt M Ymer (Swe) 6-5 default; **F Auger-Aliassime** (Can) bt P Ruiz (Sp) 7-5 6-2

Cycling

GIRO D'ITALIA
Stage 17 (Pergine Valsugana-Caorle; 195km) **1** A Dainese (It) DSM 4hr 26min 8se; **2** J Milan (It) Bahrain Victorious; **3** M Matthews (Aus) Jayco-AlUla both at same time

Overall standings: 1 G Thomas (GB) Ineos Grenadiers 71hr 58min 43secs; **2** J Almeida (Por) UAE Emirates +0:18sec; **3** P Roglic (Svn) Jumbo-Visma +0:29

Fixtures

Football
Premier League Manchester Utd v Chelsea (8pm)
Rugby league
Betfred Super League Hull KR v Wigan (8pm)
Cricket
Vitality T20 Blast North Group Lancashire v Leicestershire, Old Trafford (12.30pm)
South Group Middlesex v Surrey, Lord's (6.15pm)

Greg Wood's racing tips

Catterick **2.10** Peace Wall **2.40** Golden Gal **3.10** Prosper Legend **3.40** Little Red Dancer **4.10** Wade's Magic **4.40** Star Guest **5.12** Mutanaaseq (nap)
Wolverhampton **2.20** American Rose **2.50** Mr Baloo **3.20** Araifjan **3.50** Ottoman Prince **4.20** Victoriano **4.50** Odd Socks Havana **5.25** Plumette
Haydock **2.30** Divine Comedy **3.00** Innvincible Friend **3.30** Hougoumont **4.00** So Smart **4.30** Flammable **5.05** Tajalat **5.40** Vasilissa
Chelmsford **5.20** Stormingin **5.50** Rogue De Vega **6.22** Dark Side Prince **6.52** Lion Tamer **7.22** Fly Zone **7.52** Cappananty Con **8.22** Tomshalfbrother **8.52** Measured Moments
Sandown **6.12** Silastar **6.42** Hackman **7.12** Enemy **7.42** Desert Crown **8.12** Helm Rock (nb) **8.42** Star Player

Citizens and alcohol Guardiola jokes that City squad drank Manchester dry



◀ *Pep Guardiola says his Manchester City side showed why they are the best team in England at Brighton*

Pep Guardiola saluted the endeavour of his Manchester City players in last night's thrilling draw at Brighton after they had "drunk all the alcohol in Manchester" on Sunday night during their title celebrations.

City were presented with the trophy after their 1-0 home win against Chelsea, although their triumph had been sealed on Saturday when Arsenal lost at Nottingham Forest. It was the prompt for a deserved party, even if Guardiola himself took it easy. "At 10.30pm, I was in bed with my wife," he said. "I was exhausted. I watched Match of the Day and then I slept like a baby. But I know the players did what they have to do. When you win the Premier League you have to celebrate. They did it with the families, they enjoy a lot.

"The next morning, it was just sauna time. And the day after – yesterday – we talked a little bit in the afternoon: 'Guys you have to be ready, energy, for Brighton.' And they did it.

"I was a little bit worried … 40 hours ago we drank all the alcohol in Manchester. But the team was there and that's why I am very pleased. Because I don't want the team to drop before the FA Cup and Champions League finals. We showed why we are the best team in England."

Guardiola was furious that Erling Haaland had a header ruled out on the advice of the VAR for a shirt pull on Levi Colwill. "If it's disallowed, every action to Haaland, [by] all central defenders, is a fault," Guardiola said. "It's a goal because he's bigger, he's stronger, he won the position and it was an incredible action from Cole Palmer [on the cross]. The goal should be given." **David Hytner**

West Ham to keep faith in Moyes with plans for Palhinha and Barnes

Jacob Steinberg

West Ham are increasingly likely to keep David Moyes as their manager and will back him by targeting Fulham's João Palhinha and Leicester's Harvey Barnes this summer.

Moyes has been under pressure for much of the season. However West Ham have stood by the 60-year-old and they are leaning towards giving him another season after reaching the Europa Conference League final and winning their fight against relegation.

Sources close to the board have the impression that West Ham, who will qualify for the Europa League if they beat Fiorentina on 7 June, will not be looking for a new manager this summer. Checks have previously been made on Paulo Fonseca, Brendan Rodgers, Graham Potter, Marco Silva and Ange Postecoglou as potential replacements for Moyes.



▲ *Harvey Barnes could be sold for less than £50m if Leicester go down*

West Ham have not made a final decision and there will only be full clarity once they have held talks with Moyes at the end of the season. But while there is disappointment at the side's failure to push on in the league, there is respect for Moyes's achievements during his time at the club.

The focus is likely to switch to strengthening the side during what promises to be a challenging summer. West Ham are facing the prospect of losing Declan Rice. The midfielder is a key target for Arsenal, Manchester United and Newcastle.

West Ham will hope to receive at least £100m but they will be left with a gaping hole in midfield. One potential replacement for Rice is Palhinha, who has impressed for Fulham with his tough tackling and interceptions.

James Ward-Prowse, who is expected to leave Southampton, is another option in midfield. Moyes will also be keen to strengthen on the left wing and West Ham have registered an interest in Barnes. The 25-year-old has a valuation of at least £50m but he could be cheaper if Leicester are relegated on Sunday.

'I don't like it': terms of Toney's ban challenged by Southgate

➔ **Continued** *from back page*

year. Competition for Pickford comes from Arsenal's Aaron Ramsdale and Palace's Sam Johnstone, who comes in with Newcastle's Nick Pope injured.

The most eye-catching omission from the 25-man squad was Sterling. The Chelsea winger has had issues with his form and fitness this season and he was left out after talks with Southgate. It was felt that Sterling would benefit from a rest.

There were some strong words from Southgate on Toney's situation. He insisted the striker could go to the Euros, even though his ban ends five months before the tournament begins, and questioned why he is not allowed to train with Brentford. Toney is currently injured and he must train alone until September. Southgate, who had no issues with the length of the ban, suggested that could hurt his rehabilitation.

"The ban is the ban," he said. "I think he accepted the punishment. What bothers me is we've got to look after people. He's injured at the moment – what does he do about getting fit? How do we give him some structure over the next few months that he can develop himself or be a better person at the end of it?

"I don't like the idea that we just leave somebody so they are not allowed to be part of the football community. I don't think that's how the best rehabilitation programmes would work. But he knows that we picked him because we felt until there was a charge, he should be allowed to play. When he comes back, if he plays well then we'll pick him."



▲ *Ivan Toney has been given encouragement by Gareth Southgate*

Callum Wilson benefited from Toney's omission with the Newcastle striker preferred to Villa's Ollie Watkins. The absence of Chelsea's Mason Mount has opened up a spot in midfield for Eze, who is also eligible for Nigeria. The 24-year-old was in England's provisional squad for Euro 2020, only to suffer a serious achilles injury, and has scored six goals in his past eight appearances for Palace.

There will be opportunities for Southgate to experiment when England travel to Malta on 16 June and host North Macedonia at Old Trafford three days later. It will be fascinating to see how he uses Trent Alexander-Arnold after bringing the Liverpool right-back back into the squad. Southgate has spoken to Alexander-Arnold, who has benefited from the absence of Chelsea's Reece James with injury, about his new role flitting between right-back and midfield for Liverpool.

"All things are possible," Southgate said. "It was good to chat to him about what he is doing. I have a really good relationship with him and we talk a lot about his game. I've always recognised his qualities. As to what his best position is, who knows moving forward? We shouldn't be sitting here saying he is a midfielder now. It could be really exciting but let's see."

Southgate did not use Ben Chilwell's injury to bring in cover for Luke Shaw at left-back, with Brentford's Rico Henry overlooked. Tottenham's Eric Dier is absent after groin surgery, while Milan's Fikayo Tomori is left out. Southgate selected Dunk, whose only cap came five years ago, and recalled Mings after dropping the Villa captain last year.

Goalkeepers Jordan Pickford, Aaron Ramsdale, Sam Johnstone **Defenders** Trent Alexander-Arnold, Lewis Dunk, Marc Guehi, Harry Maguire, Tyrone Mings, Luke Shaw, John Stones, Kieran Trippier, Kyle Walker **Midfielders** Jude Bellingham, Eberechi Eze, Conor Gallagher, Jordan Henderson, James Maddison, Kalvin Phillips, Declan Rice **Forwards** Phil Foden, Jack Grealish, Harry Kane, Marcus Rashford, Bukayo Saka, Callum Wilson

United have strong chance of winning race for £60m Mount

➔ **Continued** *from back page*

title this season, is likely to prove too expensive. Chelsea are also interested in Osimhen. United are wary of spending more than £100m on the Napoli player as there is no guarantee of him adjusting to the Premier League.

Højlund is a cheaper option and highly regarded but he would not be ready to be a regular starter next season. The youngster joined Atalanta from Sturm Graz last summer and has caught the eye during his debut season in Serie A. Højlund shot to prominence when he scored a hat-trick for Denmark against Finland in March. United believe they will need to sign an additional striker if they buy Højlund.

Ten Hag is also focusing on midfield additions and United believe they have a strong chance of signing Mount, who is increasingly likely to leave Chelsea. Mount's contract expires next year and talks over an extension have stalled. Arsenal and Liverpool are also interested in the England midfielder, with Liverpool previously regarded as the frontrunners.

Mauricio Pochettino, who is set to take over as Chelsea's new head coach, would like to keep Mount. But sources believe the 24-year-old is prepared to leave his boyhood club. Chelsea have been reluctant to meet Mount's wage demands. It is thought that Chelsea, who do not want to keep players who are in the final year of their contracts, will want at least £60m for Mount.

United are also interested in the Chelsea midfielder Mateo Kovacic and they could rival Arsenal and Newcastle with a bid for West Ham's Declan Rice.

Comment
Tony Burnett



Legacy of George Floyd must be one of tangible change

Three years ago the world was stunned by the brutal murder of George Floyd at the hands of people who had sworn an oath to protect him. That horrific act unleashed years of pent-up frustration from black communities all over the world, but it wasn't just black or brown people rising; people from all backgrounds rose to say enough is enough and after the initial clamour for justice there was quickly a movement for long-term change.

Football was no different in its reaction and we saw support from players, managers and leaders across the game. Players were at the forefront through their united decision to take the knee, ensuring the debate about racial inequality stayed on the agenda.

Since then, I'm pleased to say, we have seen progress in the professional game and at grassroots level. Football has delivered some excellent work in building the infrastructure and mindset to drive change and that should be acknowledged.

But we cannot rest there. Over the next three years investment in equality, diversity and inclusion must deliver improved outcomes in some of our most pressing challenges. If football cannot deliver, the commitments of three years ago will have no credibility.

When I talk of progress, there are plenty of examples. The Premier League's No Room for Racism plan has been broadened to tackle issues such as coach progression and its establishment of a black players' advisory group has ensured elite black players are heard. The English Football League has invested in its Together strategy, and the Football Association has supported England players and staff despite intimidation and ridicule from the highest offices in the land.

The Professional Footballers' Association has worked hard to encourage players to support criminal prosecutions regarding online abuse, resulting in more frequent convictions.



▲ *Uriah Rennie is the only black referee of the Premier League era*

At grassroots level, there is a greater willingness to punish discrimination when it is identified. In short, if you commit a hate crime at a stadium, online or at the park, you are more likely to be prosecuted than ever before, and there have been strides to address under-representation of diverse communities in the media. That is all a direct result of the actions started across the game three years ago.

Elsewhere, there are many issues we still need to improve on. The notion that football is already inclusive is frankly ridiculous, given the statistics.

Yes, we see a significant presence of black players across the professional game, ranging from 35% to 45%, but fewer than 5% of managers are black. There has been only one black referee – Uriah Rennie – in the Premier League's 30-year history.

Boardrooms are still largely white and male, and although people of South Asian heritage make up 10% of the population of England and Wales, I can count the number of South Asian professional players on my fingers and toes.

We are not saying that football should not recruit or promote the best talent, but too often the best people from under-represented groups are not getting the opportunities they deserve. The myth of meritocracy in football needs to be dispelled.

It's not just about representation. We are still seeing significant behavioural issues among fans and employees. Hate chanting is still common and over the past 12 months we have seen several high-profile cases where individuals have behaved in an unacceptable way in the workplace.

Unfortunately, it always seems to take a tragedy to drive systemic change. Think of Stephen Lawrence or George Floyd and more recently Sarah Everard. There is also a danger that good intentions often peter out after the impact of the shock has gone away. That's why we must ensure the legacy of George Floyd is one of tangible change.

Some of the challenges we face will take years to produce clear outcomes, but black and brown people within football have heard the platitudes on so many different occasions and now we must ensure commitments are delivered.

Kick it Out will be watching closely and holding key stakeholders to account but that is not our responsibility alone. Everyone in football should be willing to drive change because the game will be better for it.

Tony Burnett is Kick It Out's chief executive

Michael Smith
‘Lots of my friends were users … then I got into darts’

Interview, *page 35* →



Eddie Jones
‘There’s no emotional attachment to England now’

Page 36 →



The Guardian
Thursday 25 May 2023

21

9 770261 307248

Sport



Party time for Brighton after Enciso rocket

Brighton	Manchester City
1	1

Pervis Estupiñán, Julio Enciso and Moisés Caicedo perform a jig after Brighton’s equaliser
Report and reaction *Page 38* →

TOBY MELVILLE/REUTERS

Ten Hag wants swift move for Kane and eyes Mount swoop

Jacob Steinberg

Manchester United will attempt to smooth negotiations with Tottenham by bidding as quickly as possible for Harry Kane this summer, while they are also preparing to step up their interest in Chelsea’s Mason Mount.

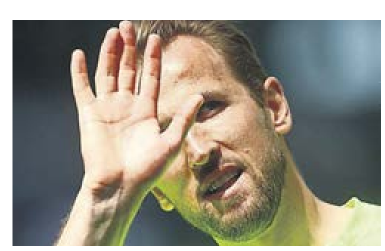
Erik ten Hag is keen to sign a new striker and Kane tops a shortlist that also includes Napoli’s Victor Osimhen and Rasmus Højlund of Atalanta. United have been quoted €150m (£130m) for Osimhen, which would put the Nigerian out of their reach. Højlund, the 20-year-old Denmark striker, would be seen as one for the future if he moves to Old Trafford this summer.

The club are aware it will not be easy to convince Daniel Levy to let Kane leave Spurs. Levy is under significant pressure after a hugely disappointing season and supporters have called for him to quit as chairman. Tottenham are yet to appoint a new manager, are in danger of missing out on European qualification and will be in further trouble if they lose Kane.

Yet Levy is a notoriously tough negotiator and there is a feeling he may be prepared to keep Kane, even though the England captain’s contract runs out next year. Kane has been silent on his future and there has been little indication he is prepared to sign an extension. There is the possibility of Spurs losing him on a free transfer next year.

However, United believe signing Kane could transform them into title contenders and they intend to test Levy’s resolve. They are wary of a saga developing and do not want to spend the entire summer chasing the Spurs striker. It is believed they will look to make their move early and hope they will come up with enough money to convince Levy to sell. Ten Hag is said to be obsessed with Kane.

United have other options but Osimhen, whose goals have driven Napoli to the Serie A 39 →



▲ *Harry Kane is Manchester United’s main summer target*

‘It can’t continue for ever’
Southgate warns Maguire over lack of playing time at United

Jacob Steinberg

Gareth Southgate has admitted his loyalty to Harry Maguire will be difficult to maintain if the England defender continues to remain on the sidelines at Manchester United.

England’s manager, who has omitted Raheem Sterling for next month’s Euro 2024 qualifiers against Malta and North Macedonia, described Maguire’s situation as “concerning”. The defender has effectively been relegated to fifth-choice centre-back at United this season and Southgate, who also challenged the terms of Ivan Toney’s eight-month ban for a breach of the Football Association’s betting rules, made it sound as if the 30-year-old’s place could depend on him moving this summer.



Harry Maguire could lose his England place if he does not leave Old Trafford

Southgate has repeatedly stood by Maguire, picking the defender even when he has been struggling at club level. Yet there is growing competition in defence, with Aston Villa’s Tyrone Mings and Brighton’s Lewis Dunk handed recalls after impressive seasons, and there was a shift in tone from Southgate as he discussed Maguire yesterday and acknowledged that the defender has started only three times for United since the March international break.

“Inevitably it’s not a situation that can continue for ever,” Southgate said. “It’s like Kalvin Phillips. They are important players for us and with Kalvin we haven’t got many players who can play as that single pivot. Of course the longer that situation goes on the more concerning it is and we’ve got, in Marc Guéhi, Lewis Dunk, Tyrone Mings, players who are playing well without the same experiences of club European football or international football. But we’ve got to keep searching for competition in that area of the pitch.”

Southgate, who rewarded Eberechi Eze’s fine form for Crystal Palace by handing the midfielder his first call-up, also admitted it would not be ideal if his No 1 goalkeeper, Everton’s Jordan Pickford, is playing in the Championship next 39 →

Rachel Reeves' economic thinking is a return to sanity *Martin Kettle, page 3*
Sinn Féin wins because it looks to the future *Sarah Creighton, page 4*
The unlikely survival of Guinness World Records *The long read, page 5*

G2 Daily pullout life & arts section *Inside*

The Guardian Thursday 25 May 2023

Journal

Opinion and ideas



ILLUSTRATION: BILL BRAGG

The right now wants to stop anyone coming to Britain at all

Aditya Chakrabortty



Few sights are as sad as someone who gets exactly what they want and hates it, yet that is exactly how the British right behaves. Hacking back the state? They swung the axe for a decade, only to complain about the damage done. Boris Johnson? Once their surefire winner, he has made them all losers. And, of course, there's Brexit - the summit towards which so many trudged, only to find the view from the top a dud. Every last one of the right's grievances has been dealt with, and it drives them mad.

The best illustration of this paradox is the item forever at the top of the rage list: immigration. For days, the usual blimpish faces in Westminster and across the press have been mottling with fury at the prospect of official figures showing a record high in the net total of people coming to this country - through the proper channels, with the correct forms and often having paid thousands of pounds in fees. This is legal migration - the kind that, just a few weeks ago, Tory backbenchers, GB News presenters and Telegraph columnists claimed to welcome. It was the people coming over in small boats who had to be stopped. "Illegal migration is not fair on British taxpayers, it is not fair on those who come here legally," said Rishi Sunak in March. But this week, he said that legal migration was creating "unmanageable pressure". So now we know: the sticking point is no longer what kind of foreigner you are - it's simply your foreignness.

"A population crisis," Nigel Farage calls it. An "addiction to immigration," says Theresa May's former righthand man Nick Timothy. Yet the immigration system they and the rest of the right decry is the very one they installed.

During the EU referendum, Vote Leave's trump card was the need to shut Britain's "open borders". One of Brexit's virtues, Iain Duncan Smith told the BBC, was that it would stop "very low-value, low-skilled people coming through". Careless words, especially from an MP judged by his own colleagues to be so low-value and low-skilled they booted him from the Tory leadership. Nevertheless, this was the reason why IDS, Farage and Johnson demanded an "Australian-style" points system, which focus group experts such as James Frayne found was "probably the most popular policy ever tested".

And lo! The UK now has total control over its borders and those Aussie rules ensure we get some of the highest-value,

2

The right now wants to stop anyone coming to Britain at all

Aditya Chakrabortty

← Continued from front

highest-skilled people the world has to offer. The right won big – so, of course, it acts like a sore loser. Duncan Smith now pleads with his government to "get a grip" on immigration.

But the government has indeed got a grip. The UK defines exactly which foreigners cross its borders. It invites in Ukrainians and Hongkongers while refusing entry to many of those fleeing Afghanistan and Sudan. The government wants foreign students to come, because the billions they spend here help prop up a broken higher education system and lift depressed local economies. No 10, the Treasury and most of Whitehall – apart, perhaps, from Speedy Suella Braverman and her team – know that the students will go once their courses are finished and that the number of Ukrainian refugees to Britain has probably peaked. The government could most likely do nothing and the next migration figures would show a big drop.

But the right needs scapegoats. The men with greased hair and a plausible manner who occupy newspaper columns and squat on TV studio sofas blame migrants for Britain's housing crisis, for taking jobs from British workers and for failing to integrate. It is at points like this, when the language around immigration gets especially Enoch, that I realise afresh just how many of the public debates on this issue feature neither migrants nor children of migrants. The media, the right often complains, is "too London". If that were really true, then 37% of media workers would be migrants, since that is how much they make up of the capital's population. Yet we know that will never happen.

Instead, we get dehumanising language used by both major parties and the press. Immigration is a game of "whac-a-mole", Westminster sources tell the Sunday Times – as if those born abroad should be hit with a hammer. This week, Labour's Keir Starmer complained of "uncontrolled immigration". No doubt he hopes to convey an idea of a government in chaos. But the most direct victims of such language are not the Tory frontbench.

New research this week from Hope Not Hate reports a direct link between politicians' use of inflammatory language around immigration and activity by the far right. Braverman hatches a Rwanda plan and the far right share the Mail's front pages. Robert Jenrick bemoans "Hotel Britain" and the boys in bovver boots lap it up. This all amid a rise in far-right protests outside hotels housing asylum seekers. The violence of such language has a consequence – and it tends to be felt by a mum in a headscarf taking her kids home on the bus, or a grandad making his way out of Friday afternoon prayers.

The narrowness with which immigrants are discussed sits at such odds with the breadth of their experiences. For her recent book, The Migrants' Paradox, LSE professor Suzanne Hall interviewed people from more than 500 migrant-run small businesses, from Bristol to Leicester to Manchester. In long, detailed surveys that took five years to collect, she found a richness and resilience that goes nearly unmentioned. On Rye Lane in Peckham, south London, 61% of migrant businesspeople spoke two or three languages; 28% spoke four or more. In Birmingham, she found a street of shops run by people from Cameroon to Kurdistan to Vietnam.

These are communities working in deprived areas, often on the frontline of street racism and in the face of council incomprehension. Yet they plug on, despite "long working hours, falling wages and rising rents". The reward for many is not prosperity but precariousness, not citizenship but what Hall calls "denizenship". They are both the heart of the local high street and confined to the very periphery of national politics.

You don't hear them whining. Indeed, you may not hear them at all. They've been drowned out by the men who got everything on their shopping list and now have a bad case of buyer's remorse.

The Guardian

Founded 1821 Independently owned by the Scott Trust № 54,979

'Comment is free... but facts are sacred' CP Scott

Boris Johnson

Rishi Sunak cannot exorcise the ghosts of a regime he loyally served

There are many lessons still to learn from the pandemic, but there is no mystery about Boris Johnson's conduct. He broke the rules of lockdown and lied about it. The exposure of his behaviour drained public support away from him and his party. Those facts are not altered by news that fresh allegations relating to the use of the prime ministerial country retreat at Chequers have been reported to police.

A Tory faction is outraged on behalf of their former leader, insisting that he is the victim of a conspiracy – a "witch-hunt" conducted by a liberal "blob" operating through the civil service. This sinister entity is said also to have targeted Dominic Raab, who resigned last month over claims of bullying, and Suella Braverman, who is alleged to have breached the ministerial code by trying to involve department officials in the handling of a speeding ticket.

After days of dither, the prime minister yesterday accepted the home secretary's defence – that she was only concerned about security protocols, but accepted points on her licence and a fine once it was clear that no bespoke alternative was possible – and declared the case closed.

Rishi Sunak can expect no gratitude from Ms Braverman and her supporters. The prime minister's indulgence will confirm to disgruntled Tory MPs that he is pliable, not that he is ideologically sound. The suspicion is that the whole business has been confected by the home secretary's enemies. They are numerous when defined as the set of all people who disagree with her or think she is incompetent.

Meanwhile, acolytes of Mr Johnson are especially ill-disposed to the current prime minister because they recall his resignation in July 2022 as instrumental in their hero's downfall. The events of last summer have been woven into a martyrdom myth that charts Conservative decline from a loss of faith in the unique election-winning powers of "Boris".

That narrative ignores all the evidence – enough available at the time and more that has subsequently come to light – that Mr Johnson was unfit for office. The persistence of the denial testifies to ethical and intellectual debilitation in the Conservative party. It is also a symptom of Mr Sunak's weakness. A leader with robust authority and a clear sense of governing purpose would have more effectively repudiated Mr Johnson's legacy.

The incumbent prime minister struggles with this task for various reasons. He was elevated to Downing Street to restore financial credibility and basic governing competence, in the aftermath of Liz Truss's short and calamitous reign. But relative stability turns out not to be sufficient for a polling renaissance, and Mr Sunak lacks a more coherent agenda. His support in the wider party has shallow roots. He was defeated by Ms Truss in last summer's leadership contest. Most problematically, he served loyally as Mr Johnson's chancellor for the very period that he would now prefer to see fade from memory.

Mr Johnson and his supporters won't let that happen. The Covid inquiry, now engaged in dispute with the government over disclosure of evidence, won't let it happen. Mr Sunak tried to sell his leadership as a restoration of integrity and capability in office, but his bluff has been called. He cannot exorcise the ghosts of rotten Tory government when he is one of them. This will surely turn out to be problem for the country as well as the party.

Carers

Labours of love must be valued as work and rewarded with money

Westminster rarely serves up good news, so let us celebrate when it does. Millions of employees are about to get a new statutory right: they can take up to a week's extra leave to care for elderly, sick or disabled relatives. The law on carers' leave was introduced by the Liberal Democrat MP Wendy Chamberlain and cleared its final parliamentary hurdle last week. All that awaits is royal assent. The Lib Dems describe the new act as a "first step"; what they want next is paid leave for carers. In this week's announcement on the NHS, Sir Keir Starmer made the same commitment for Labour.

There is much fertile political ground here, for any party that wants to claim it. There are around 5 million unpaid carers in the UK, looking after parents or family members. Without them, a lot of unwell and elderly people would have no lifeline, and local authorities and the NHS would come under huge strain. Many caregivers would never dream of taking money for their labours, but that doesn't mean their work is valueless. Far from it: researchers at the University of Sheffield put the total value of unpaid care in England and Wales at £162bn a year, or the equivalent of the entire NHS in England.

Studies of unpaid carers show they do work that is exhausting, volatile and often upsetting. After all, they are watching people they love in pain. Yet, until fairly recently, they were meant to leave all those responsibilities outside the workplace and fit them in around whatever gaps they had in their diaries.

In this, there are clear parallels with how workers in social care are treated. Again: they perform vital roles looking after people who depend on them for the basics. It is an overwhelmingly female workforce, and in London largely ethnic minority. And, according to research from the Health Foundation, around one in four care home workers live on the brink of poverty. One in 10 did not always know where their next meal was coming from.

That was based on research carried out just before the pandemic, a time when the public gathered on their doorsteps to clap for carers and the government promised a "protective ring" for care homes. Yet pay in care homes remains very low, and local authority funding for those needing care is abysmal.

One lesson rammed home in the pandemic was how our working routines were less important than the caring responsibilities we had. The lesson has either been forgotten or ignored. There remains a vast tension between the importance of this work, both paid and unpaid, and how little recognition it gets. Carer's allowance is miserly and attendance allowance near rock bottom. Westminster's focus on productivity is actively damaging here: it means less care squeezed into less time in days that are crammed with more visits and patients.

Over the past year, politicians have focused on how financially stretched their voters are. Yet they have not done enough work on how stretched Britons are in carrying out their everyday responsibilities. That, surely, is where Westminster should train its attention: not on growth but on ensuring sufficient support for the everyday economy of care, housing, health and schools. The right to carers' leave is a good start in that direction, but it also points up how much further there is to go.



Rachel Reeves' economic plans are a welcome return to sanity

Martin Kettle



The shadow chancellor speaking in Washington DC yesterday
PHOTOGRAPH: CHIP SOMODEVILLA/ GETTY IMAGES

The mythology of political history insists that politicians' speeches are important. A lifetime in political journalism tells me different. Political speeches have got to be made, and some politicians are good at them - Michael Heseltine, the best I have ever heard - but most speeches are events of the moment. They are decorative, not determinative. Most do not matter much and are rightly forgotten, even the good ones.

There are, though, occasional exceptions. Rachel Reeves' speech to the Peterson Institute in Washington DC yesterday has a claim to be one of those with a longer shelf life. Not because it was an oratorical tour de force stuffed with smart lines. It wasn't. Some of Reeves' terminology, such as her embrace of what she calls "securonomics", is a distracting barrier to understanding what is otherwise a key idea. But that's a small point. This speech matters a lot. It matters because the ideas and commitments it contains are serious - and because it addresses something indisputably important.

What it addresses is the long-term dysfunction of the British economy, now accentuated by Brexit. Inflation may have dropped to 8.7%, but it is still higher than expected - and food, services and underlying inflation are all still growing. Interest rates may rise again and are unlikely to fall soon. Britain's economy is walking wounded. The cost of living crisis remains acute for millions. Optimism is in short supply.

Reeves' speech was partly a response to the national imperative to put that right. But it was also about Labour's familiar need to prove to voters that it can be trusted with the economy. Unsurprisingly, support for the Tories as the best party for the economy has tanked. But economic confidence in Labour, though greater than for the Tories, still remains low. The issue is Labour's achilles heel. With an election now possibly less than a year away, the shadow chancellor needed to make a seriously big pitch. Hence the journey to New York and Washington DC for her keynote speech.

That speech, which also marked the publication of a Labour pamphlet titled A New Business Model for Britain, repays careful reading. It does so because it contains a structured argument about the British economy. As such, it lays out Labour's direction of travel on the dominant issue now facing Britain, and the one by which a future Keir Starmer government will ultimately be judged by voters. Such is the depth of mistrust in politics today that it is tempting to say it makes an argument by which the very future of credible democratic government of any kind in Britain may stand or fall. It's as important as that.

> **The shadow chancellor's project is more New Deal than New Labour - and the influence of Bidenomics is clear**

At the heart of the shadow chancellor's argument are four core principles. The first is that the rules of the global economy have changed because of repeated shocks since 2008. The second is that government has to be more proactive in order to establish the economic order that is so conspicuously under threat from those shocks. The third is that liberal economies must work together to do this, not against one another. And the fourth is that all this must happen within effective national fiscal rules - and not by allowing debt to balloon.

In the wake of the economic and political tumults of the past seven years, this reads very much like a return to sanity. Some of the building blocks that Reeves proposes may have been touted occasionally during the Conservative years, as when Theresa May argued for more active government. But they remained words not deeds, not least under Rishi Sunak, who is opposed to the idea of industrial strategy.

But what Reeves now advocates is definitely not a return to the past. Her long-term aim is to restore growth to the UK economy. But Reeves' approach is a world away from Liz Truss's slash-and-burn dash for growth. It would also propel a Labour government into a very different place from that adopted after 1997 by New Labour. In some ways it would be more New Deal than New Labour, and the whole project owes a lot to Joe Biden's administration in Washington and the government-led investment that marks Bidenomics.

In Reeves' strategy, the state would play a more overarching role and would not vacate the territory of decision-making to the banks and to business. An industrial strategy - focused above all on the green investment programme, worth £140bn over five years - would dare to speak its name again for the first time since the 1970s. And supply chains would be made more secure by lessening dependency on China, and by a more active, pragmatic alignment with Europe.

Reeves is traditional in one sense. She is trying to carve out a middle way between free-market globalism and state control of the economy. This is something that every social democratic party in western Europe has attempted to do, albeit within various different national traditions since the 1950s. Hers is a 2020s version, and although it owes much to the US Democrats, it also has things in common with the German SPD's programme. To dismiss all this as Blairite would be trite.

A week ago the New Statesman dubbed Reeves the most influential person in British progressive politics today, with Starmer relegated to second place. Her Washington DC speech lends weight to that case. If nothing else, it is the most substantial answer that Labour has yet offered to those who claim they do not know what the party now stands for.



Sinn Féin wins because it looks to the future

Sarah Creighton



Northern Ireland was created to secure an in-built Protestant and unionist majority. When, in the early 1930s, the Ulster Unionist MP Basil Brooke told his constituents not to employ Catholics, Northern Ireland's prime minister, James Craig, commented: "I would not ask him to withdraw one word he said."

How times change. Last Saturday, Sinn Féin became the largest party of local government in Northern Ireland. The party now has 144 seats across local councils, as opposed to the Democratic Unionist party's 122. This comes on the back of last year's local assembly election when Michelle O'Neill, deputy leader of Sinn Féin, became Northern Ireland's first minister-designate. Now, Belfast city council, a unionist stronghold, has only 17 unionist councillors out of 60 seats. Historic is the only word for it.

The results reflect a fact: Northern Ireland is slowly changing beyond recognition. The census results last year show that Catholics outnumber Protestants for the first time. The younger generation are more likely to be from a Catholic, nationalist background and identify as Irish or Northern Irish, rather than British. The unionist support base is older and gradually shrinking. Crucially, there is a growing middle ground full of voters who identify as neither unionist nor nationalist.

This new reality poses problems for unionism. As a political movement, it needs to broaden support and become more appealing to younger people. Even before the Brexit vote, unionists spoke about the need for reform and to reach across the divide to nationalists. There has been little progress. The DUP is currently boycotting the assembly to protest against the Northern Ireland protocol, a move that has only irritated nationalists and the middle ground more.

It is the DUP, paradoxically, that has created the conditions that allowed Sinn Féin to thrive. The latter didn't go into the local elections talking about a united Ireland, but focusing on the collapse of devolved government and devastating cuts to public services. To take just one example: discretionary support, a crisis loan made to the most vulnerable people, is facing an estimated 75% cut.

Many nationalist voters suspect that the real reason for the DUP's boycott of the assembly is simply O'Neill's rise to first minister. Unionists, they say, can't accept "second place"; the old prejudices never die. The DUP only said it would accept holding the deputy first minister post, as opposed to the first minister post, after last year's assembly election - that hasn't happened yet and few nationalists believe it will.

Perspective, though, is needed. We aren't heading for a united Ireland. Sinn Féin may be the largest party of local government, but unionists are still well represented across Northern Ireland. The DUP had a good election, consolidated its position, and didn't lose a single seat. This is where the importance of the non-aligned Alliance party comes in - it doesn't take a position on the constitutional question and last week it became the third largest of local government. Neither side in the constitutional debate has won it over yet.

The side that wins any future border poll will be the side that promises a better future for Northern Ireland. That hope is sorely needed. This week, for instance, the East Belfast Gaelic Athletic Association club was involved in a security alert, having received threats and intimidation earlier this year. The team's pitches are close to an integrated primary school and nursery, which had to close as the security operation unfolded.

East Belfast GAA is a cross-community team. Its motto is "Together", the words emblazoned on its crest in Irish, Ulster Scots and English, alongside Harland and Wolff, the cranes that built the Titanic. This is, seemingly, too much for Northern Ireland's bigots. It is also a stark reminder of the dark, ugly legacy of our history. The purported attack has been condemned by politicians across the board.

We are in a holding pattern that may not last. What happens if the middle ground decides that it is no longer willing to accept a status quo of devolution characterised by long periods of absent government and a declining quality of public services? Nationalists have an answer - a united Ireland - that demographic change may make easier to sell. But unionism? Without a positive, inclusive vision of the union and Northern Ireland, it faces oblivion.

* **Sarah Creighton** *is a political commentator from Northern Ireland*

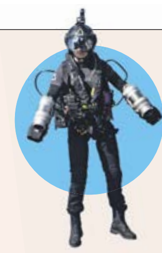
The long read

For the record

Since 1955, one organisation has been certifying and cataloguing all of life's superlatives. But has it gone from being about the pursuit of knowledge to simply another big business? By *Imogen West-Knights*



The long read



A couple of summers ago, I went to the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin. I'd spent a lot of time in the city before, but I'd never visited the brewery. The tour is good. You can learn about how barrels are made, get your face printed in the head of a pint and have a drink in a bar with a 360-degree view of the city. But what stayed with me most was something I saw there by accident.

One of the exhibit rooms was closed off, but only partially. Curiosity got the better of me, and behind the door, I found a room that was empty but for a table. On the table, there were a handful of editions of the Guinness Book of Records. I hadn't thought about this book since I was in primary school. Back then, the Guinness Book of Records meant a big, brightly coloured, hardback volume containing 500-odd pages of pictures of people doing things like growing their hair very long or juggling knives. These were books that children gleefully unwrapped on Christmas Day and argued over with their siblings. As I flicked through the old editions – 1994, 2005, 2012 – I thought about the connection between Guinness the stout and Guinness the book for the first time, as well as a hundred questions I hadn't thought to ask as an eight-year-old marvelling at the man with the stretchiest skin or the most needles inserted into his head.

Even now, in the age of YouTube and TikTok, when you can catapult yourself into fame, riches and recognition for feats of all kinds with nothing more complicated than your phone, the Guinness Book of Records continues, somewhat incredibly, to exist. The book, which since 1999 has gone by Guinness World Records, is still an overwhelming blizzard of wacky pictures and hard data.

But the company that publishes the book, also called Guinness World Records, is not the same as when I held my first annual, the green and silver 2002 edition. Sales of the book have declined in recent times, and the company has had to find new ways to make money – not all of which have met with the approval of the GWR old guard. When I spoke to Anna Nicholas, who worked as the head of PR for the book in the 80s and 90s, she lamented how things had changed: records are now more sensationalist, she said, to meet the demand of an audience that can see extraordinary things whenever they like on social media. "Guinness seemed to have had no issues with shamelessly and unapologetically selling out its devoted audience," claimed one once-ardent fan in a 2020 blogpost.

It is strange to think of Guinness World Records – a business named after a beer company, which catalogues humanity's most batshit endeavours – as the kind of entity that could *sell out*. At first glance, it seems like accusing Alton Towers or Pizza Express of selling out. But the deeper I delved into the world of record breaking, the more sense it made. In spite of its absurdity, or maybe because of it, record breaking is a reflection of our deepest interests and desires. Look deeply enough at a man attempting to break the record for most spoons on a human body, or the woman seeking to become the oldest salsa dancer in the world, and you can find yourself starting to believe that you're peering into humanity's soul.

On a windy late autumn morning, at the Olympic Park in east London, I found a young man pogoing with as much nervous solemnity as it is possible to pogo. Tyler Phillips was there to try to break the record for most consecutive cars jumped over on a pogo stick. Behind him, five taxis were lined up side by side, with a gap between each. A dozen Guinness World Records employees stood around to witness this attempt. Their number included a man in a navy and grey suit with a GWR logo on its breast pocket – a suit I later learned is reviled by many at the company for the high voltage of static it produces – who was introduced to me as Craig Glenday, the book's editor-in-chief, who watched with the unruffled air of someone for whom seeing a man pogostick over cars is all in a day's work.

The atmosphere was tense. Final measurements were taken. Cameras were set up. Phillips did some practice runs without the cars. On one occasion, he found himself sprawled on the pavement. I winced.

Finally, it was time. Everyone fell silent. Phillips steadied himself, and began. He nailed the first jump. Then the second, then the third. All breath was held. When Phillips jumped the final taxi and landed unscathed, he let the pogo stick fall to the ground and did a celebratory backflip, elated. "Yes!" he shouted, before running over to wrap Glenday in a bear hug. (Phillips has since beaten his own record, jumping over six cars in Milan in February 2022.)

Glenday has been part of GWR since 2001, and has, as a result, led an extremely varied professional life. He has suffered in the line of duty. One time on a trip to Istanbul to meet the woman who can protrude her eyeballs furthest out of her face, he received an insect bite that led to an infection that almost resulted in amputation. He was once stranded for a week in the southern tip of Chile with the band Fall Out Boy, who were trying to fly to Antarctica to break the record for the fastest time to do a gig on each continent. "Locals thought I was in Fall Out Boy. They were like, 'Why is this fat old man in Fall Out Boy?'" he recalled.

A few weeks after witnessing Phillips's feat, I visited Glenday at the Guinness World Records headquarters in central London. At first glance, the office looks much like any other. Until, that is, your eyes alight on items such as the puck from the longest ice hockey game (52hr 1min, 2002) and the broken toilet seat from a 2007 attempt at smashing the most toilet seats with your head in a minute (47). It is here that Glenday and his team put the book together, as well as make or break the dreams of record-setting hopefuls all over the world.

Glenday was keen for me to try breaking a record myself. He browsed through their database of 60,000-odd records to find one that was easy to do in the office and not impossibly difficult to beat. We settled for the longest time standing on one leg blindfolded. The record stood at 31min 14sec. Glenday printed off six pages of guidelines for me. For more complicated records, the guidelines can run to dozens of pages, but these were relatively simple. I read that I was not permitted to rest my other leg on my standing leg, that I must have two independent witnesses timing my attempt with stopwatches accurate to 0.01 seconds, film my attempt for Guinness's verification, and be blindfolded even in the event that I am in fact blind.

Like all record attempters, I was allowed three goes. My first attempt clocked in at a pathetic 3.4 seconds. Then 25.06. Then 31.03. I'm somewhat ashamed to say that a tiny part of me was surprised. As I read the guidelines, a voice had said: "What if this is my secret skill? A hitherto undiscovered genius I have: standing on one leg blindfolded?" I didn't really expect to break the record. But the tiny possibility was thrilling.



Jamie Stanley (above) and Richard Browning (below), who achieved the fastest speed in a body-controlled jet engine power suit

ANDY WEEKES/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK



Previous page: Etibar Elchiyev going for 'most spoons on a human body' in 2011; below: Norris and Ross McWhirter in 1974

DAVID GRAVES/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

As a child, I thought of Guinness as something like a mystical higher power, or some kind of government body. It seemed like it must have always existed. Not so. It began with an argument in 1951. The managing director of Guinness, Sir Hugh Beaver, was on a hunting trip in Wexford, and his party couldn't agree which game bird was fastest. This dispute seems to have stuck with Beaver. Thinking back on the incident three years later, it occurred to him that these kinds of arguments must happen all the time and there would surely be an appetite for argument-settling answers in the form of a compendious book that catalogued world records, as well as the extremes of the natural world. This volume could be distributed to pubs that sold Guinness. It could also be sold in shops, and provide another revenue stream for the brewery.

For help, Beaver turned to identical twins named Ross and Norris McWhirter who ran a fact and figure-provision service for the newspapers of Fleet Street. The first edition, published in 1955, was shaped by the brothers' eclectic personal taste and sense of propriety. Norris hated popular music because he thought it was "ephemeral", and so limited the number of records in this field. No records to do with sex were included, because the twins thought, as Norris put it in 1954, "You can get those records out of medical literature, but ours is the kind of book maiden aunts give to their nieces." Instead, readers could discover the highest lifetime milk yield of a cow (325,130lb, held by a British friesian called Manningford Faith Jan Graceful). The foreword read: "Guinness, in producing this book, hopes that it may assist in resolving many such disputes, and may, we hope, turn heat into light."

The book became wildly popular, and the annual Guinness Book of Records was born, with the McWhirter twins remaining at the helm. Norris stepped down as editor in 1985, but continued in an advisory role until 1996, when he stopped working for GWR. Ross was shot dead by the IRA in 1975 for publicly offering a £50,000 reward for information leading to the conviction of terrorist bombers in Britain. "The book was Norris and Norris was the book," was how Anna Nicholas put it to me. (Norris was also fervently rightwing – an enemy of trade unions, the European Union and sanctions against apartheid South Africa.) Under his editorship, GWR headquarters became a homing beacon for the UK's biggest oddballs, who showed up claiming everything from the heaviest sausage dog to the world's largest toothbrush.

Today, anyone arguing with their friends about the fastest game bird (the red-breasted merganser, at 130 km/h) would, of course, consult the internet, not the latest edition of Guinness World Records. There is a decidedly analogue feel to the company. But when I sat down to chat with Glenday in the GWR headquarters, he made the bold claim that the age of information on demand has not killed the need for the book. In fact, he continued still more boldly, it may have helped them.

He positioned GWR as a kind of factchecker of the absurd. Glenday argues that the book serves as an authority in a way that the great wash of information on the internet can't: they know what the records are because they've measured them, taken video evidence and can point to the guidelines they checked the record against. "You might as well just shout a question into the street and see what answer you get back: that's what the internet is like," Glenday said, sounding a little like someone who had time-travelled from 1995 to speak to me about a thing called the internet.



Tyler Phillips breaking the record for most cars jumped over on a pogo stick in 2021
GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS



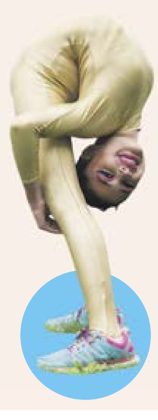
There are, I posit, four types of Guinness world records. Type one: records broken without being record-breaking attempts. The most words in a hit single (Rap God by Eminem at 1,560); the most venomous viper (the saw-scaled viper *Echis carinatus*). Type two: sporting achievements. The fastest boxing knockout (4 seconds), the longest tennis match (11hr 5min) and so on. Type three are the ones that stick in our memories from childhood: records that seem to exist purely in order to be records. The largest toast mosaic (189.59 sq metres), fastest time to roll an orange one mile with your nose (22min 41sec), and perhaps the most iconic of all, longest fingernails (42ft 10.4in). And then there is the fourth kind: absurd marketing stunts by companies. In 2020, for instance, Bush's Beans set the record for largest layered dip (493kg and 70 layers) to "celebrate the Super Bowl".

For some observers, the existence of this last category is a sad reflection of how far the company has fallen. "They've lost the intellectual integrity that the twins had," Norris's son, Alasdair McWhirter, told me. "For them, it was a knowledge-based quest, and they had tremendous enthusiasm for that. Whereas now everything is done to make money." Since 1997, when Guinness merged with another conglomerate, and formed Diageo, GWR has had to operate as a self-supporting business rather than the novelty arm of a beer company. (GWR is now owned by the Canadian conglomerate the Jim Pattinson Group.)

These days, GWR Consultancy, which was introduced in 2009 and offers adjudication services to customers for a fee, accounts for half of the company's revenue. Brands looking to break a record as part of a publicity campaign cannot exactly buy their way into the book, but a fee starting at £11,000 gets them the services of a GWR consultant, who can help them brainstorm which record the company could attempt for most viral PR, and an official adjudicator for their attempt. In 2022, Mastercard got a bunch of footballers to break the record for the highest-altitude game of football on a parabolic flight: 20,230 ft, played in zero-gravity conditions on a specially outfitted aircraft. Perhaps slightly less impressively, in 2021, Currys created the world's largest washing machine pyramid (44ft 7in) in a car park in Lancashire.

'One adjudicator flew to Sydney to weigh a risotto, and then got back on the plane again. That's a lot of time out of the office'

Liberty Barros, record holder for fastest 20-metre backbend knee-lock walk
GRAEME ROBERTSON/ THE GUARDIAN



I asked Glenday what he thought of complaints that the organisation had changed for the worse. "We've appended that corporate side to the business, rather than replaced anything," he said. Besides, he added, most of these records-as-marketing-stunts don't make it into the book.

GWR has faced other criticisms since the introduction of the consultancy services. The most serious of these concern Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov, who ruled Turkmenistan between 2007 and 2022. Berdymukhamedov was a dictator whose regime carried out arbitrary detentions, controlled the media, persecuted homosexuals and women seeking abortions, and discriminated against minorities. Berdymukhamedov was also a keen GWR fan. Between 2011 and 2018, his government and bodies linked to the government made a total of seven applications to GWR for record attempts. According to his wishes, the city of Ashgabat sought and broke the record for "the highest density of buildings with white marble cladding". A tower he ordered to be built won the record for the largest architectural image of a star.

When I brought up GWR's work with Berdymukhamedov, Glenday admitted that this had been a misstep, because of Turkmenistan's human rights record. The company is now more careful about their association with anything where they think there's "some political angle", he said. "If you're a school, and you come to us from Turkmenistan and want to do a record attempt, that's totally fine. But if it's organised by the minister of culture, then you start to think well, wait a minute. Why?"

At the core of GWR lies the work of its 90 or so adjudicators. It is their duty to separate fact from fiction and, insofar as the institution can be said to have dignity, they must preserve it. Each one must wear a special jacket at every event, no matter the weather. They are not permitted to eat or drink alcohol while on the job, and they can't fraternise after hours with the record-setters. The adjudicators bring the certificate, framed, to each record-breaking attempt, and if you fail they take them away to be shredded, because sometimes people have gone through the Guinness bins to steal them.

It used to be that GWR adjudicators needed to be present for any record attempt – in the early days, this usually meant Norris McWhirter himself. Mick Meaney, an Irishman who attempted to beat the world record for longest live burial in 1968, lived in a coffin under a builder's yard in Kilburn for 61 days. He survived on "steak and cigarettes" delivered through a tube, and defecated in a specially fitted extraction pipe. But he forgot to invite a GWR adjudicator to verify his attempt in person, and so was denied his place in the book. "One adjudicator flew to Sydney to weigh a risotto, and then got back on the plane again. That's a lot of time out of the office," Glenday said.

Today, most adjudications take place remotely, with video evidence being scrutinised. If you want to have an adjudicator present at your attempt, either in person or by video link, you would have to pay £6,000. This would also get your record attempt fast-tracked for approval. Otherwise, you would have to submit video evidence of your attempt to GWR through its online portal, and wait a few months to hear whether it was satisfied that you had broken the record.

Glenday, like many Guinness employees, has undertaken the official adjudicator's training. This takes about a week, and involves media training, public speaking guidance, codes of behaviour and a crash course in how to use various types of measuring equipment, such as a sound meter to record, say, the loudest burp by a male (112.4 db). Adjudicators are often sent across the world on little notice, and aren't told what the attempt is until they have accepted the mission. Every record has to be treated with the same gravity. Adjudicators speak gravely of the disappointment of having to deny certificates to people who fail their attempts. It especially breaks their hearts to refuse records to schools and charities – but sometimes, it must be done.

Beyond the regular people, who have a particular record they want to break, and the businesses, who want to break a record for publicity, there is another category of record breaker: people who have turned record breaking into a discipline in its own right, with its own rules and skillsets. These are the super record-breakers, the gods on the Mount Olympus of GWR.

Super record-breakers are the kind of people who try to break a record a week. David Rush, a teacher in Boise, Idaho, broke his first record – the longest duration juggling while blindfolded – in 2015, and since then has broken more than 250 more. No human in history has caught as many marshmallows fired from a homemade catapult in the space of one minute (77), nor has anyone put on more T-shirts in 30 seconds (17). "Not only can you get better at anything," Rush told me in a Zoom interview, "but the belief you can get better at something





dramatically improves your ability to do so."

One of Rush's direct competitors is Silvo Saba, a gym owner from just outside Milan and the man who currently holds the most Guinness World Records: 193. Saba's particular genius is in identifying what are known as "soft records": ones that most people would be capable of breaking, if they approached it in the right way. For Saba, record-breaking is not primarily a physical feat but a strategic one. In his 13 years of record breaking, he has learned never to smash a record, but to break it just a little, so that if anyone subsequently bests it, he can go back and surpass their attempt without too much additional training. "I do like to defend the records I hold," he told me.

Almost all the super record-breakers spoke of the camaraderie they shared with their peers; they were a community. Many used the word "family". And if record breakers are a family, there is a clear patriarch: Ashrita Furman, record breaker for four decades, and inspiration to many of the younger generation. Rush has a childhood memory of seeing Furman break a world record on television by balancing 50 pint glasses on his chin. Andre Ortolf, a 29-year-old German who specialises in eating things very quickly (the more liquid the food the better, apparently), said that his first GWR book was the 2004 annual. On page after page, he saw Furman's name. "I realised, OK, this guy's breaking nearly everything. So I can break one."

Furman, who is now 68, lives in Jamaica, New York. When I arrived at his house last summer, I found him on his front porch, neatly dressed in a yellow polo shirt and New Balance trainers. He invited me to go round the back of the house to the garden, and then went inside to fetch something, jumping the four steps of his porch in one smooth leap.

Furman keeps his GWR certificates, more than 700 of them, in a clear plastic box in his wardrobe. He has so many that he has stopped even applying for the certificates when he breaks a record. He pulled out his copy of the first Guinness book, evidently well-thumbed, and read me the quote in the foreword about turning heat into light with the reverence an evangelical might quote a passage from the Bible.

Furman's journey started when he was 16 and disillusioned with life. One day he met an Indian spiritual teacher living in Queens called Sri Chinmoy. He decided then and there to follow him for the rest of his life. Ashrita is not his given name – that is Keith – but a name he chose for himself, a practice adopted by all followers of Sri Chinmoy. A few years later, some of his followers were training for a 24-hour bicycle race around Central Park, as a way to achieve self-transcendence through physical exercise. Furman, having been unathletic all his life, hadn't wanted to compete. But he began to feel guilty for shirking and signed up a week before the race. The night before, the competitors gathered to meditate with their teacher. "And he said, just for fun, how many miles do you think you're going to do in the race? The best riders thought they could do maybe 300, 325 miles. And my teacher says, so Ashrita, how many miles? 400 miles?"

'Super record-breakers have an aura around them, an attitude, a presence. And it's important not to be intimidated by that'

The following day, with no training, he cycled 405 miles, and tied for third place. He did it – "simply", he says – by meditating. "As soon as I stumbled off the bike, I connected to the Guinness book, because I've always been a big fan. I thought, if I could do this, then I can break a Guinness record. And I want to do it not to get my picture in the book, but to tell people about the power of meditation."

He has used this power to break hundreds of records. He has pogoed in Antarctica, walked 80.95 miles with a milk bottle on his head, won a potato sack race against a yak in Mongolia, all to promote Sri Chinmoy to a wider audience. "I realised that I have this capacity. And it's not just me," he said. He echoed what Rush had told me: being the best at something is not innate. It's something that you decide to do.

I mentioned my pitiable attempt at the standing on one leg record. Furman's eyes lit up. "You could do that one, you could … 32 minutes is not a long time. See, that's a soft record," he said, a grin breaking across his face, "that makes me think, wow, I could do that."

Above: Ashrita Furman in Egypt in 2005, when he walked 7 miles balancing a billiard cue on his finger; top: Mochi, who was named dog with the world's longest tongue in the US in 2017

REUTERS/ALADIN ABDEL NABY; KEVIN SCOTT RAMOS/GWR/PA

Furman is one of the old guard who believes that the business of record breaking has become too much of a business. "Things have changed a lot with Guinness," he told me. "It was much more personal, back in the day. For years, when the book came out, I would go out to lunch with the editor, or the head of PR. I think we kind of lost that. I know Craig [Glenday], I think he's a great guy, but really it's become more of a big business. And I understand that. It's the way the world has changed."

These days Furman is more interested in helping others achieve their record-breaking goals than in breaking records himself. To Furman, records are a measure of human progress. Encouraged by his belief in my abilities, I spent the weeks after my visit practising standing on one leg blindfolded. Initially, I was very bad. Then, soon enough, I wasn't. I got up to 12 minutes and eight seconds before it occurred to me to check that the record had not been broken since I tried it at the Guinness office. It had. It now stood at 1hr 6min 57sec, broken in early 2022 by a man named Ram Phai in India. After reading this, I was demoralised, and I gave up. The reason I didn't break the record was not because I was incapable of doing it. It was because I didn't want it enough.

Or perhaps I didn't want it for the right reasons. GWR may be a business, but for the people pursuing the records, it is far more than that. George Kaminski, who held the record for the largest collection of four-leaf clovers until 2007, collected every one of them from the grounds of prisons in Pennsylvania where he was serving a life sentence. The woman with the longest fingernails, Diana Armstrong, does not have the longest fingernails because she wants her picture in a book. She has the longest fingernails because she decided never to cut them again after her daughter, with whom she used to get her nails done, died aged 16.

I asked everyone I spoke to whether they thought that keeping track of world records was important. "What is the definition of important? It's what you or other people find important," Rush said. The events we celebrate in the Olympics were initially chosen to demonstrate some kind of martial prowess: throwing spears, running quickly, wrestling an opponent. We've added new categories: basketball, skateboarding. But most of the achievements we value, in the Olympics as elsewhere, are arbitrary. Guinness World Records are a way of acknowledging the value of human endeavour of any kind: of celebrating achievement in the abstract.

I spoke to Glenday again late last year, a few months after my meeting with Furman. He'd had a frustrating week: an attempt at the highest bungee jump that ends with toast soldiers being dipped into boiled eggs had been scuppered by unusually high wind. But he was not defeated. "Reading about things that you've never even conceived of, or can't ever have imagined, is just thrilling," Glenday told me. "You get an adrenaline hit from that discovery, and we still get it now. I still get it when I see things that I've never seen. Like this year, we've got a dog and a cat on a scooter together."

Not long ago, I logged on to Zoom to watch Ortolf, the young record breaker with a gift for eating very fast, attempt to break his next record: the shortest time to sort 500g of peanut M&Ms by colour, using only one hand. The holder of the title, a man in Perth, had achieved this in 1min 33.03sec. Ortolf, at his house outside Munich, had seven bowls of equal height laid out in front of him and a camera set up on a tripod. He opened the bag of M&Ms, emptied them into one of the bowls and showed the now-empty bag to the camera, to me, and to his other witness, a friend.

He sat down and placed his left hand behind his back, and his right hand flat on the table. He took a few breaths. The timer started, and he began. He had a technique: blue first, as he finds them easiest to spot.

The only sound was Ortolf's measured breathing, and the rhythmic ding of blue chocolate hitting ceramic. Then brown, green, yellow, orange. The final colour he could do in scoops. As the last handful hit the bowl, his witness stopped the clock. One minute, 27.45 seconds. Another record in the bag, his 104th.

Ortolf laughed, a wide smile splitting his face. "Yes," he said, "*yes.*" ●

Imogen West-Knights *is a regular contributor to the long read*

Letters

guardian.letters@theguardian.com
@guardianletters

Established 1906

Country diary

Flow country, Scotland

The white flowers of the bogbean shake, sprinkling starlight over the bog. They stand unsteadily in the pools, moving with the slightest wind. As the first colour of the morning fills in, it seems to come as much from above as below, where red mosses glint from the dark peat. *Sphagnum capillifolium,* acute-leaved, or red bog moss, forms dense hummocks, rising from the ground like an outward pulse of blood: a fleshy, silent circuitry.

Stretch upon stretch of red courses through the heather and bog myrtle, while behind them, the dim mountains are hugged by cloud. Shadows move in. Rain begins. Small circles form on the top of the bog pools as the sweet scent of myrtle washes through. The only sound is the rain hitting my coat and the surface of the pools. The only movement is the drop of the water and the cool brush of leaf into leaf, stem against stem.

I lower myself and listen. Here, by the bog, there is a squelch and a gurgle and a pop. Here, by the moss, is a sink and a suck and a thirst. Known hoarders, some sphagnum mosses can hold around 20 times their own weight in water. Most peatlands, above the water table, receive their only water from rainfall. There is an urgency to the drumming fall and its eager recipients. The water's volume increases with each passing minute. Then, tiny springtails leap between the leaves; their crashing bodies find their feet in rhythmic miracles of landing. This close to the sphagnum is a sounding of what is often hidden, a burst of microscopic living. The bog is only quiet at human height. The moss is only silent from our distance.

I pull myself back up, following the trails of red bog moss through the heather. Its silent circuitry is now one of pops and tremors. Its exposed veins are flaming tributaries flashing by the rising pools. The bogbean quakes in the rippling rain. The mosses soak, filled with light again. Day breaks. Rain slakes the yearning ground.
Elizabeth-Jane Burnett



ILLUSTRATION: CLIFFORD HARPER

We may edit letters. Submission and publication of letters is subject to our terms and conditions: see theguardian.com/letters-terms

Tory housing plan will put refugees' lives at risk

On the same day that better protection for UK renters was announced (Report, 17 May), it was disturbing to read that basic safety rules could be overlooked for asylum seekers' accommodation (Alarm as ministers target housing standards to cut asylum hotel bills, 17 May).

The way to address the pressure on asylum accommodation would be to tackle the huge backlog of people waiting for decisions rather than throwing regulations out the window and potentially putting people's lives and safety at risk. No one in our country should be denied basic safety checks that could protect them against risks such as fires or carbon monoxide poisoning.

People who have been forced to flee their homes need stability, support and to feel safe. We find ourselves overreliant on costly hotel accommodation as a direct result of the failure to tackle the asylum backlog. Around 160,000 people are living in limbo while they wait for an asylum decision.

Hotels, barges and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) with less regulation are not the answer to a crisis born out of an administrative buildup of cases. These accommodation options do not offer the supportive environment that men, women and children coping with the trauma of having to flee their homes due to war and persecution need. The impact that these settings have on people's physical and mental health can be devastating for both the people seeking our protection and for the communities they live in.

The best way to reduce the backlog would be to process asylum cases more quickly, including by prioritising children and those waiting more than three years.
Mike Adamson
Chief executive, British Red Cross

● One wonders how far this morally bankrupt government can sink. If it is exempting accommodation for vulnerable people from licensing, then how long will it be before it decides that there is no need for any licensing in the private rented sector. How many asylum seekers will be ill, or worse, as the result of this move?

Local authorities do still have other powers available to address unsafe housing - for example, "statutory nuisance" provisions under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 to deal with the worst hazards such as cold, damp and mould, crowding and lack of space, and unhygienic conditions. Indeed, councils have a duty to deal with the very worst of conditions, but even here the government is seeking to undermine the statutory system that environmental health officers use to assess risks.

It is to be hoped that councils and their environmental health officers up their game and work to protect those whom the government seeks to abandon.
Stephen Battersby
Vice-president, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

● This says it all: the government admits that it doesn't think some people's lives matter. People fleeing war and persecution and seeking sanctuary here are not worth protecting from house fires, carbon monoxide poisoning or overcrowding. In short, they are guaranteed slum conditions - approved by the government.

And what will they say when a house crammed with people burns down because the electrics were faulty? Wring their hands and say "we take asylum seekers' welfare very seriously, and lessons will be learned"? Will their thoughts and prayers be with the victims' families? What a charter for the rights of bad landlords.

A plea to any decent MP: do all you can to block this plan.
Susan Hofsteede
Bangor, Gwynedd

Braverman plays fast and loose with road safety

Whether Simon Jenkins likes it or not (Speed limits are not all that Braverman is unaware of, 23 May), Suella Braverman's disregard for safety *is* the Westminster issue of the day. Speeding kills. It is the attitude that my life is more valuable than the life of anyone else on the road. The offence is further confirmation of the tinpot arrogance shown by a succession of this government's second-rate ministers of state. Braverman needs a driving awareness course rather than points, and a tour of a hospital to see what speeding does to people.
Graham Murphy
Liverpool

● Simon Jenkins trivialises speeding. Exceeding the limit, although it is indeed rife, is serious and a major cause of deaths and serious injuries on the road. A limit of 20mph is an entirely sensible measure, and the idea that "London drivers now have eyes only for their speedometers" is nonsense. Anyone driving should have an idea of their speed without continually monitoring it, and if they haven't, they are not safe to be on the road risking other people's lives.
Dr Richard Carter
Putney, London

● Not for the first time, Suella Braverman has missed the point. A "private" speed awareness course would lack the essential whiff of self-imposed and shared humiliation that is part of the learning experience.
James Urquhart
Edinburgh

● My recent experience of a speed awareness course was very different from what Zoe Williams reports (Speed courses are dire - but not in the way that Braverman thinks, 23 May). I had an online course lasting about two and a half hours including a short break. The instructor was friendly and constructive. I never felt I was being shamed. A lot of the material was interesting and some of it was useful. I have been driving for more than 50 years, but I emerged with a will to become a better driver. So the course worked.
Tim Scott
London

Climate activism is doomed to fail

Helena Echlin writes that sensible methods of climate activism didn't work (Why I stopped arguing about the climate emergency and tried the silent treatment instead, theguardian.com, 22 May), so she became a member of Red Rebel Brigade, a silent climate activist performance group, and now feels that she is doing something useful.

But how does she know if she is? Ryanair has just reported that it's heading for a bumper year of selling cheap flights. Is dressing up in red having any effect on those air passengers? Of course not. Little if anything works in the face of corporate greed, government inaction and material desires that drive rampant consumerism. In the UK we have been cushioned from massive environmental disasters. Even when one happens, I seriously wonder if the penny will drop.

The realistic choices are to either join in the party before everything collapses or quietly live in line with one's conscience in the knowledge that it will make no difference whatsoever.
Patrick Cosgrove
Bucknell, Shropshire

Corrections and clarifications

● Speaking in the House of Lords, the archbishop of Canterbury cited a forecast from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that by 2050 the climate crisis would lead to at least 800 million more refugees in total, not each year ('Morally unacceptable': Welby in stinging attack on migration bill, 11 May, p1).

● The first opium war was from 1839-42, not 1939-42 (How opium shaped history, 23 May, Journal, p6).

Editorial complaints and corrections can be sent to guardian.readers@theguardian.com

Taking a breath to cure a hangover

Re your article on the effect of alcohol on the body (G2, 24 May), when I was in the RAF and woke up with a hangover I would go and sit in the cockpit of a Meteor jet and breathe the oxygen supply for five minutes. Worked wonders.
JD Nixon
Hookwood, Surrey

● Your report (Rail passengers in England could lose their access to wifi amid cost cuts, 23 May) describes a proposal that would have been rejected from The Thick of It as being too dumb to be credible. In a climate emergency, amid budgetary constraints, what should we do: invest in public transport and encourage its use, or disincentivise people from using trains further while continuing to subsidise road building and airport expansion?
Dave Hunter
Bristol

● I'm astonished that Greenwich council is telling people to take pot plants from their balconies and outside spaces (Hands off our garden gnomes and pot plants!, 24 May). Growing plants is good for people and the planet, and we all need more greenness and less concrete. I wonder if it is time for a right to garden.
Nandita Dowson
London

● What a wonderful life-enhancing letter from Yvonne Williams (The domestic bliss of bringing up baby, 24 May), who sounds an important rallying cry for humanity. Yes, there are very real difficulties in raising children, but nothing in my life has given me such rewards as caring for my children and, later, helping with my grandchildren. Those are such precious fleeting years.
Michael Harrison
Oxford



George Logan

Entertainer and musician who took on the persona of Dr Evadne Hinge in the duo Hinge and Bracket

George Logan, who has died aged 78, was best known as his female alter ego, Dr Evadne Hinge, the piano-playing half of the eccentric musical-comedy double act Hinge and Bracket, who found fame on BBC radio and television in the 1970s and 80s.

Hinge and Dame Hilda Bracket had met, went the legend, in their youth when part of a touring opera company. Now genteel ladies of a certain age – and from another age – they performed songs (for the benefit of the uneducated masses) by Ivor Novello ("dear Ivor"), Noël Coward and Gilbert and Sullivan. The two spinsters resided together (Hinge ensconced in the east wing) in Bracket's mansion in the fictional Suffolk village of Stackton Tressel.

The comedy came from the waspish interplay between the two and no lack of double entendres and innuendo – but their characterisations eschewed grotesqueness in favour of consummate character playing from Logan and his performing partner, Patrick Fyffe.

During their witty, between-song banter they conjured a Britain forged in the frayed gentility of church fetes and draughty village halls. The characters embodied the stoical pluck of the am-dram, but the pair's charming self-mockery was born from affection and a genuine love for the music they played (and sometimes murdered).

A perfect foil for the childlike, attention-loving Bracket, the precise, demure, and long-suffering Hinge possessed the drier wit, peering over her half-moon spectacles to jab in with perfectly timed, often cutting, interjections. Logan, gifted with an excellent ear, also arranged the musical numbers.

The pair broke into the mainstream with a successful 1974 Edinburgh run of An Evening with Hinge and Bracket – a purported recital that began with the pair handing the audience complimentary sherries. The show transferred to the Royal Court in London before a six-month run at the Mayfair theatre.

Logan, left, as Dr Evadne Hinge with Patrick Fyffe as Dame Hilda Bracket in 1988. Below, Fyffe and Logan in 1974
PA/ALAMY; EVENING STANDARD/GETTY

Moving again to the Ambassadors, they were commissioned by the playwright and producer Ray Cooney to write a follow-up, Sixty Glorious Minutes (1975). Now firmly established, they had success on radio with The Enchanting World of Hinge and Bracket, on BBC Radio 4 (1976-79), and The Random Jottings of Hinge and Bracket (1982-89) and At Home with Hinge and Bracket (1990), both on Radio 2.

On TV they starred in a number of one-off galas and concerts over the years, and made three series of their own show, Dear Ladies (co-written with Gyles Brandreth), on BBC2 (1983-84). They also appeared in a televised Royal Opera House production of Die Fledermaus alongside Kiri Te Kanawa in 1983.

Reportedly a favourite act of the Queen Mother, they chalked up two appearances at the Royal Variety Performance and on stage (in character as Hinge and Bracket) they played Miss Prism and Lady Bracknell in The Importance of Being Ernest (Whitehall theatre, 1987), and toured in a production of Peter Shaffer's Lettice and Lovage in the 90s. Fyffe died in 2002 and Logan retired from show business shortly afterwards.



> **"It was like God had given me a huge gift, that there was a way through life for me that I had never anticipated**

He was born in Rutherglen, South Lanarkshire, the eldest child of Sarah (nee Rae) and George Logan, who worked in the motor industry. There were theatrical cousins on his father's side and theirs was a musical household, with young George enchanted by the Tchaikovsky recordings he heard on the radio.

His parents bought him a piano and he started taking lessons from the age of seven – by 15 he was being classically trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music. His formal education took place concurrently at Rutherglen academy and then the University of Glasgow, where he studied music and English.

A flamboyant personality in a small coal-mining town, he knew from an early age that he was different, but felt condemned to a life of clandestine sexual assignations until a late-night bus-stop encounter with four "obvious queens, all camp and outrageous", who took him to a gay bar. They dubbed him Audrey Auburn – on account of his hair colour – and changed his life. "All the burdens I'd felt, this great pressure to go out with a girl to fit the mould, had gone," he told his friend the journalist Liam Rudden in an interview in 2021. "It was like God had given me a huge gift, that there was a way through life for me that I had never anticipated."

Logan moved to London in 1965 and while working as a computer programmer he frequented a gay pub in Marylebone. One day the pianist for the drag acts did not turn up for the shift and so Logan filled in and was soon a regular fixture, eventually conceiving his own solo drag-and-piano act.

Having encountered Fyffe on the scene in 1970 they – at Fyffe's suggestion – formed a double act. The original conception was that Fyffe would play a retired opera singer and Logan her male pianist, but as they developed it the musical inserts became duets and Fyffe suggested it might be funnier if Logan, too, dressed as a woman – and so Dr Evadne Hinge was born.

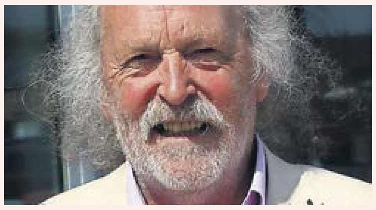
Logan wrote a fictional account of Hinge's life and career, The Naked Doctor, in 2014, and, the following year, a joyous, sometimes filthy, personal memoir, A Boy Called Audrey. By this time he had opened his own guest house in Limousin, France, with his partner, Louie Perone, whom he married in 2019.

Louie survives him, as does his sister Jennifer.

Toby Hadoke

George Logan, actor, comedian and pianist, born 7 July 1944; died 21 May 2023

Other lives



Peter Jones

Artist and creator of Colourscape walk-in installations visited by thousands of people across the UK

My husband, Peter Jones, who has died aged 83, was a prolific artist of colour and light, best known for his Colourscape walk-in installations, each a series of interlinked chambers of translucent PVC, creating space with pure colour. He was also a mathematician and hang-glider pilot.

Following studies in the early 1960s at St Martin's School of Art in London, Peter made architectural constructions, which he termed Spaceplaces, within buildings and galleries, using coloured panels and rods. Working with his fellow artist Maurice Agis, he had shows at the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, and at the Stedelijk, Amsterdam, and in 1967 they jointly won the Netherlands' Sikkens prize for use of colour. They continued to collaborate until 1977.

Wanting his art to be easily accessible to a wider audience, Peter began to work outside. He realised the powerful effect of daylight transmitted through primary-coloured material and experimented with air-inflated, interconnected domes that people went inside. He called this installation Spaceplace, Towards a Colour Village, and it was first exhibited outside the Serpentine Gallery, London, in 1971, followed by 25 shows touring the UK over three years. His work evolved in 1974 into Colourscape, with a long-running show at Battersea Park, south London, in 1977 and 1978, as well as in other parts of the UK.

Peter and I met in the mid-1970s and became partners in 1977 (we married in 2011), moving the following year to Wales, where we collaborated on much larger Colourscapes. Thirty-five structures were made by 2012, showing every year in the UK and internationally and visited by thousands, the immersion in colour providing intense perceptual and emotional experiences.

In 1989 we formed a partnership with the composers Simon Desorgher and Lawrence Casserly, creating the Colourscape music festivals. Together we developed the 1995 Colourscape of 100 chambers, Peter's largest work, incorporating a cathedral-like performance space, with orchestras, dancers and musicians. This has continued annually on Clapham Common, in south London, and elsewhere. Other work involved making large geodesic spheres for performance, designing installations of colour and sound for children with special educational needs, and developing experimental projects at Aberystwyth Arts Centre.

Peter was born in Hilsea, Portsmouth, to Dorothy (nee Walters), who worked as a cashier in a butcher's shop, and Charles Jones, an RAF engineer. The family moved several times before settling in London, where Peter went to Harrow grammar school then Welbeck college in Leicestershire for the sixth form. After St Martin's, he established a studio, Space Structure Workshop, in the old Woolwich dockyard in south-east London in 1963. He gave courses on colour, and also taught in the capital's art schools until 1978.

Peter is survived by me and our son, Gabriel, by his three children, Jake, Ellen and Lorna, from his first marriage, in 1961, to Jane Bailey, which ended in divorce, and by six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and his brother Roger.

Lynne Dickens



People inside a Colourscape installation, made by Peter Jones and Lynne Dickens

Charlotte Aull Davies

American social anthropologist and founder member of Anthropoleg Cymru who settled in Wales

My friend and mentor Charlotte Aull Davies, who has died aged 80, was a social anthropologist and the author of Reflexive Ethnography: A Guide to Researching Selves and Others (1998). It continues to be a key text for students, combining both practical guidance for, and the philosophical contexts of, ethnography.

Charlotte was born in Lexington, Kentucky, one of three children of Llewellyn (nee Holmes) and Charles Aull, who worked for the South Carolina highways department. After leaving Waggener high school in Louisville, Charlotte gained a degree in mathematics at Florence State College (1963), then a master's in mathematics at the University of Mississippi (1965). She then pursued a PhD in social anthropology with Richard Fox at Duke University in North Carolina.

Acting on Fox's suggestion, she decided to go to Wales to study ethnicities and social change. Her resulting research was published in 1989 as Welsh Nationalism in the Twentieth Century: The Ethnic Option and the Modern State.

She became fluent in Welsh, studying the language while conducting her PhD fieldwork in Bangor and Cardiff (1976-77). While living in Cardiff, Charlotte met Hywel Davies, a journalist and Plaid Cymru activist. They married in 1979 and adopted Elen Gwenllian in 1983 when she was eight weeks old.

In 1985, the family moved to the US and Charlotte was offered the position of lecturer in the school of criminal justice at the University of South Carolina. They moved back to Wales, to Caernarfon, in 1988, and the following year Charlotte became a researcher in the department of sociology and anthropology at Swansea University.

In 1992, she was appointed lecturer in social research methods at Swansea, rising to be senior lecturer in sociology and anthropology in 2000. The university awarded her an honorary research fellowship when she retired in 2009.

Charlotte was a founder member of Anthropoleg Cymru/ Anthropology Wales, set up to promote both the study of anthropology in Wales and the anthropological study of the country. Together, she and I edited several papers from the Anthropoleg Cymru conferences into Welsh Communities, New Ethnographic Perspectives, published in 2003.

She also worked on a restudy of Colin Rosser and Chris Harris's 1960s research The Family and Social Change, which culminated in Families in Transition: Social Change, Family Formation and Kin Relationships (2008), co-written with Harris and Nickie Charles.

Her last book, Gender and Social Justice in Wales, which she co-edited, was published in 2010. As well as academic papers



and chapters, she wrote for the magazines Planet and Barn, and Y Papur Gwyrdd, a Welsh-language environmental periodical that she published with Hywel (2007-2012).

From 2010 to 2020, Charlotte was a governor of Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Tan-y-Lan, Morriston, Swansea. She loved mountain walking, cycling and horse-riding.

Charlotte is survived by Hywel and Elen, and by her sister, Helen.

Stephanie Jones

Birthdays

Kim Bailey, racehorse trainer, 70; **Alistair Burt**, former Conservative minister, 68; **Alastair Campbell**, writer and political strategist, 66; **Julian Clary**, comedian and actor, 64; **Prof Dame Uta Frith**, developmental psychologist, 82; **Sir Ian McKellen**, actor, 84; **Cillian Murphy**, actor, 47; **Mike Myers**, actor, 60; **Dame Alison Nimmo**, former chief executive, Crown Estate, 59; **Frank Oz**, puppeteer and director, 79; **Geoffrey Robinson**, former Labour MP, 85; **Octavia Spencer**, actor, 53; **Geraint Thomas**, cyclist, 37; **Dame Clare Tickell**, former chief executive, Hanover Housing Association, 65; **V (formerly Eve Ensler)**, playwright and activist, 70; **Faith Wainwright**, structural engineer, 61; **Paul Weller**, musician, 65; **Jonny Wilkinson**, rugby player, 44.

Graham Pyatt

Warwick University mathematical economics professor who presented insights on BBC Election Night

My friend and former colleague Graham Pyatt, who has died aged 86, was a founding member of the department of economics at the University of Warwick, having been appointed professor of mathematical economics there at the young age of 28.

While at Warwick he was influential in the creation of several degree programmes, was a consultant to the accounting firm Coopers and Lybrand (1968-74), and was responsible for the early BBC Election Night computer predictions (1968-74), presenting insights into the results alongside the political scientist David Butler.

Born in Bramhall, near Stockport, Greater Manchester, Graham was the eldest child of Frank Pyatt, who owned a cotton mill in Bolton, and his wife, Betty (nee Downs). He attended Bolton school then Ellesmere college, before studying economics and statistics at Manchester University, after which he did an MA at the University of Chicago and a diploma in statistics at Nuffield College, Oxford.

He subsequently joined the department of applied economics at Cambridge University as a junior research officer. There he worked on the Cambridge Growth Project and completed his PhD under the direction of the Nobel laureate Sir Richard Stone before



his meteoric rise to become a chair in mathematical economics at Warwick in 1964.

A decade later he left Warwick when he was invited by the World Bank vice-president Hollis Chenery to be senior adviser in its Development Research Centre, helping to put poverty reduction rather than growth at the centre of World Bank policies.

After leaving the World Bank in 1986 he returned to Warwick until a final move to the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague in 1994 and retirement in 2002.

Graham's 1959 marriage to Alison Dykes ended in divorce in 1982, after which, in 1988, he married Shirley Patterson, who died in 2019.

He is survived by his three daughters, Lyn, Jo and Lisa, from his first marriage, and two stepsons, David and Richard, from his second.

Jeff Round

Announcements

Deaths

JEUDA, Basil Simon, of Macclesfield, born Didsbury Manchester 17 September 1938. Died peacefully after a long illness on 14 May 2023 surrounded by his family at East Cheshire Hospice. Dear husband of Laura, father, uncle, cousin, grandfather, Baba and friend. The funeral took place on 17 May at Southern Cemetery Manchester.

For Announcements, Acknowledgments, Adoptions, Anniversaries, Birthdays, Births, Deaths, Engagements, Memorial Services and In Memoriam, email us at announcements@theguardian.com including your name, address and telephone number or phone 0203 353 2114.

Reread our obituaries of the writer Martin Amis, the Conservative politician Peter Brooke and the architectural historian Elain Harwood
theguardian.com/ obituaries

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

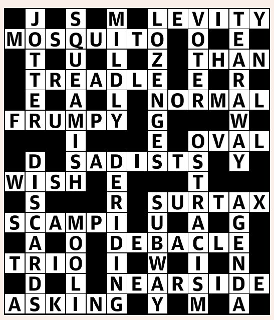
Killer sudoku
Easy

5	4	7	6	1	8	9	3	2
2	9	1	7	3	5	4	8	6
8	3	6	9	2	4	5	1	7
4	7	8	1	6	2	3	5	9
1	2	3	8	5	9	7	6	4
6	5	9	4	7	3	1	2	8
7	8	2	5	9	1	6	4	3
9	1	4	3	8	6	2	7	5
3	6	5	2	4	7	8	9	1

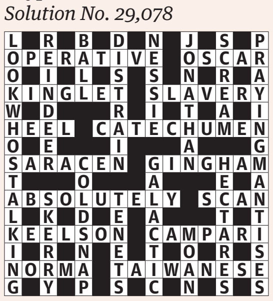
Medium

1	7	9	5	3	2	8	6	4
6	5	3	8	4	7	9	2	1
8	2	4	1	9	6	7	5	3
5	8	7	4	2	1	3	9	6
9	6	2	7	8	3	4	1	5
4	3	1	9	6	5	2	8	7
3	1	5	2	7	8	6	4	9
7	4	8	6	5	9	1	3	2
2	9	6	3	1	4	5	7	8

Codeword



Cryptic crossword
Solution No. 29,078

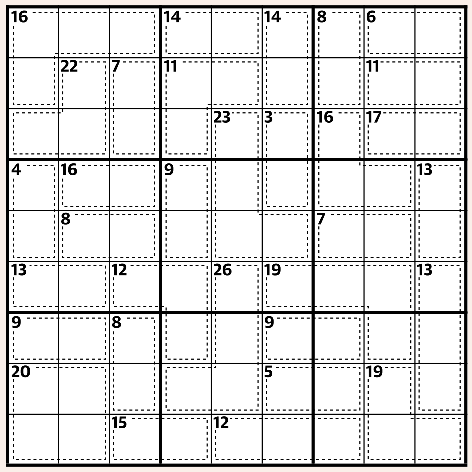


Stuck? For help call **0906 200 83 83**. Calls cost £1.10 per minute, plus your phone company's access charge. Service supplied by ATS. Call **0330 333 6946** for customer service (charged at standard rate). **Want more?** Get access to more than 4,000 puzzles at **theguardian.com/crossword**. To buy puzzle books, visit **guardianbookshop.com** or call **0330 333 6846**.*

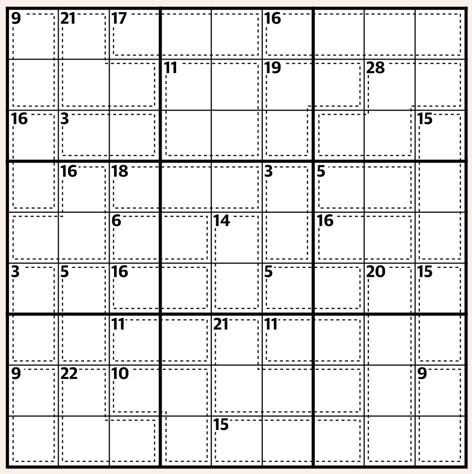
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.

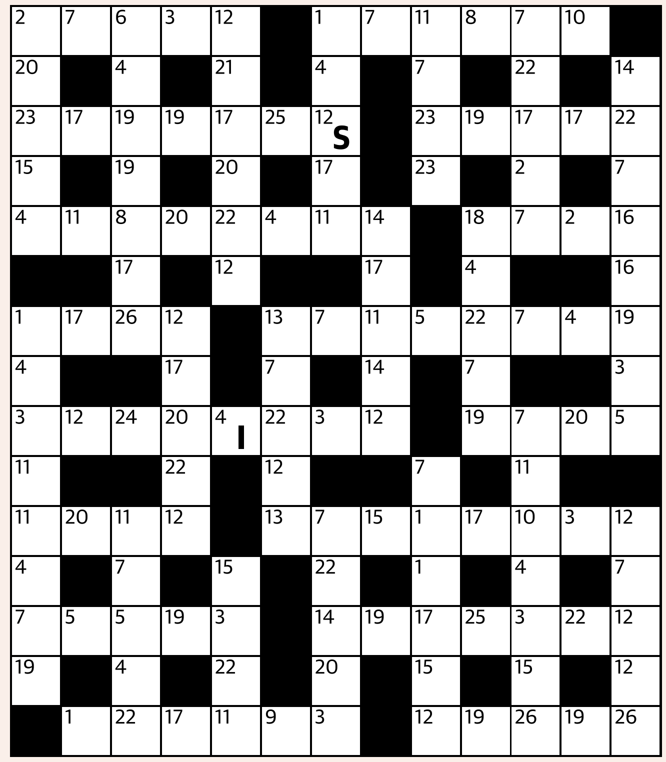


Medium

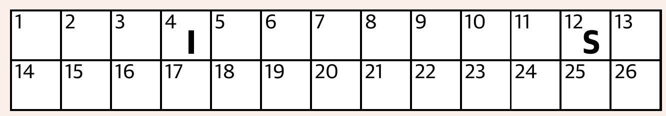


Codeword

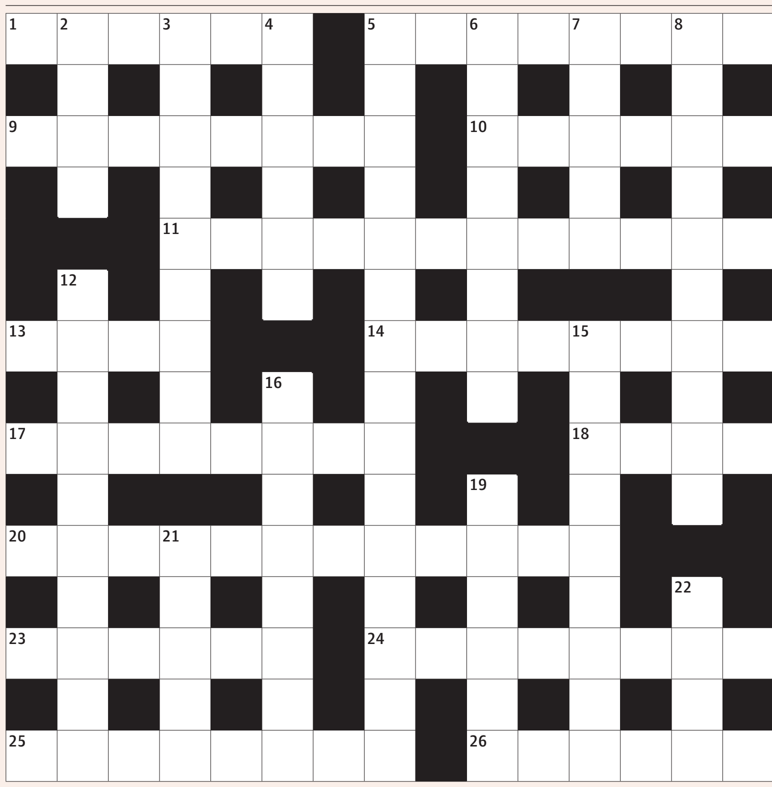
Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z



Guardian cryptic crossword No 29,079 set by Nutmeg



Across

1 Delight in birdsong when crossing height (6)
5 Second small cap went astray again (8)
9 Solution obtained by division not quite working (8)
10 Blighted cast close to mutiny (6)
11 Spotted girl going round grand cathedral's colourful display? (7,5)
13 Leading lady starts to dominate in vaudeville act (4)
14 Moves awkwardly and clears off, hampering doctor (8)
17 Thriving, or just OK? (4,4)
18 Outstanding poetry recital (4)
20 Consequence of sheep's sex change procedure? (12)
23 Minimal payments covering women's toilets at first (6)
24 Doddering engineers on retiring list after last month (8)
25 Temple of Greek god, old parts in addition (8)
26 Annoyed when raven's last aboard Noah's craft (6)

Down

2 Takings from assembly room picked up (4)
3 Undergoing trial with a company's banks when will's lacking (9)
4 Spooner's small Scottish song room (6)
5 Bone and short cartilage injured where beds arranged for visitors (9,6)
6 Entertainer's trick taking in reporters etc (8)
7 Head's row overheard (5)
8 Reckless trendy individual turning tail (10)
12 Movie-maker's constant echo penetrating behind closed doors (4,6)
15 Ex-PM put up with fearsome Eurasian (5,4)
16 Underrate French peach, one dry inside (8)
19 Jewish people accepting Roman Catholic gem (6)
21 Bumbling in record time (5)
22 Foul lifts not recorded (4)

Mmmmmmm!



What chefs eat for fun

The Guardian

G2

Thursday 25/05/23

Life & Arts

Adrian Chiles
Bend it like Braverman
page 3



Beyoncé's wearing my jeans!
Markus Klinko's best shot
page 9



Free £10 bookshop voucher*

Open up your world view with 12 issues for £12

12 issues for £12

The Guardian Weekly magazine helps you catch your breath in a dizzying news cycle. And with our limited time offer, you can keep up with the week's most essential global news for just £1 a week for 12 weeks. You'll find in-depth articles handpicked from the Guardian's award-winning journalism, written by leading minds you can trust.

Try out a subscription today and get 12 issues for £12*

Try now at theguardian.com/12for12 or scan the QR code

The Guardian Weekly

* Choose from over 150,000 titles from the Guardian bookshop store - available only to subscribers from this offer. Offer is 12 issues for £12, followed by a quarterly subscription of £41.25 every 3 months. Offer available only to customers in the United Kingdom. You must be 18+ to be eligible for this offer. Guardian News and Media reserves the right to end this offer at any time. Offer details correct at time of printing. Offer ends 25th June 2023. For full terms and conditions visit theguardian.com/guardian-weekly-subscription-terms-conditions.

Adrian Chiles



I can't wait to try out Suella Braverman's non-apology at home

No amount of nagging will persuade a seal to balance a ball on its nose. This was an indisputable point made in an article I read about how techniques used by animal trainers could be applied in human relationships. Fascinating stuff. In other words, working someone's nerves for days on end isn't going to persuade them to get the job done. But if they do somehow get it done, be sure to throw them a fish. Or something. It's all about reward: less stick, more carrot. I get that. But the bit I can't remember is how to get the seal to balance the ball on its nose in the first place. And now I can't find the article, so I may never know.

The skills deployed by people in specialist fields are rich in untapped potential for use in domestic situations. The rhetorical devices practised by politicians are a case in point. Chris Mason, long before he became the BBC's political editor, told me how his immersion in the language of politics was so complete that it had started to creep into his home life. Only that week he had found himself "pledging" to do more washing-up. And although we rail against politicians' unapologetic non-apologies, how many of us have never used a version of: "I'm sorry you are offended by what I have said and done"?



Sorry, not sorry … Braverman

On Monday, in the Commons, our home secretary was questioned over allegations that, having been nicked for speeding and offered a place on a speed-awareness course in lieu of penalty points, she asked civil servants if she could get her own personal course organised. In the end, she took the points rather than the course. She must have missed my piece in praise of the speed-awareness course I recently took. Perhaps she's not a Guardian reader.

I make no judgment as to the impropriety of anything she might have requested from a civil servant. But I must award her several points for her performance in the house, using a technique I am now working on replicating in my personal life. She is hardly the first politician not to answer a question directly by, instead, answering a slightly different question. But, my, how she went about it.

"Last summer, I was speeding," she intoned. "I regret that. I paid the fine. And I took the penalty. And at no point did I attempt to avoid sanction." Five clear points there, perhaps using the fingers of one hand as an aide memoire. "What I *am* focused on …" she continued. And so on.

Someone had another go at asking her the same question, and she repeated her five points, essentially verbatim and identical in rhythm and tone. And again. And again. And again. At least five times in all. It went from being exasperating to farcical to, in the end, kind of triumphant. Her interlocutors had nowhere to go.

So, one morning, should your significant other enquire why your friend is asleep in their underpants on the kitchen floor, how are you going to respond? Go on, try it. Be brave, be Braverman. Here are your five key points: 1. Last night, I made a mess in the kitchen; 2. I regret that; 3. I failed to clean up; 4. I regret that too; 5. I do not shy away from taking the blame for that. What I *am* focused on is the deliciousness of the meal I cooked, the fact that I do all the washing and ironing, and that I will now be taking the dog out for a walk.

Then be ready for the follow-up question: "But what about him on the floor, lying there in his pants?" Clear your throat and go again: "Last night I made a mess in the kitchen. I regret that etc, etc." Repeat your five-point answer verbatim as many times as necessary. I feel sure this approach will do the trick. Throw yourself a fish.

One short sentence has cured my overeating

I read and listen to an awful lot of words. How many? Let's see. I must get through at least four hours of speech radio, podcasts and audiobooks a day. At roughly three words a second that's more than 10,000 an hour, so let's call it 40,000 a day. And I must be in conversation for about the same amount of time, so allowing for silences and subtracting the words I use, that's maybe another 15,000 a day. And I must read about the same number. I reckon, all up, 70,000 a day; 25m a year.

Some of those words have more merit than others. A few, vanishingly few, are sheer gold. One short sentence can reframe everything.

An example: I've banged on extensively about my propensity to overeat, at every meal, and between meals, all day, every day. After more than half a century of this, the shame of it hadn't abated any more than the habit. I'd all but given up trying to change.

Then a month ago, I picked up Paul McKenna's book I Can Make You Thin. This turned out to be something of a gamechanger. I have not overeaten since and I'm 6kg lighter. The whole book is interesting, and I have even quite enjoyed the "weight-loss mind-programming audio".

But it's just one sentence that has done the trick. It's a simple enough sentence expressing a simple enough idea: the importance of eating very slowly. "In this way, you make every bite a conscious choice, eating your food like a gourmet and savouring every mouthful instead of shovelling it in on automatic like a barnyard animal."

That's it. I think it's the comic image of the barnyard animal that nails it. I am no longer a barnyard animal. I love the word so much that I am using it as a verb. And I'm pretty confident that I've stopped barnyarding for life.



No more barnyarding for me!

PHOTOGRAPHS: SHUTTERSTOCK; ALAMY

Pass notes



№ 4,563

Father's Day

Age: As a tradition celebrating fatherhood, ancient; as a modern, add-on afterthought to Mother's Day, 113 years old.

Appearance: In the US, UK and many other countries, it's the third Sunday in June. In Australia, it's the first Sunday in September. Still others celebrate it on the Feast of Saint Joseph, 19 March.

So even if you forget, it's always Father's Day somewhere. That's not going to work as an excuse.

I love my father, but I always struggle to find an original gift that combines something he enjoys with the appropriate sentiment. What did you get him last year?

A rake. I see the problem.

I mean, it was a pretty nice rake. Have you thought about perusing the Goop Father's Day gift guide?

Isn't that Gwyneth Paltrow's vagina-scented candle company? Yes, but it's so much more than that.

I know – they also sell dubious wellness remedies. Yes, but it's also so much more than that. This year they've added a specially curated, 71-item shopping list for those looking for the perfect Father's Day gift.

What sort of thing are we talking about? How about a lovely beach blanket, for just $890 (£718)?

$890? What's it made out of, spun gold? It's made from cotton, but according to Goop, this striped blanket is "the last you'll ever buy".

You're goddamn right it is. Do they have any £1,000 rakes for sale? Or what about a Hugo, for $219?

That's a little closer to my price range, but what exactly is a Hugo? It's a hands-free prostate stimulator.

A what now? It looks a bit like a lobster claw, but with a powerful vibrating motor inside. The insertable head massages the prostate.

Insertable, did you say? The external head, meanwhile, "delivers satisfying vibrations to the perineum".

Are you suggesting I buy one of these for my dad? That's up to you. They're also offering Arcwave Ions for $199.

Is that like an Alexa? Sort of. It's "an air-pulsing sex toy for penis owners".

Oh my. Don't they have any bird feeders, or books about trains? Not really, but it's not all sex toys. They have a quality tartan shirt, red and black, oversized, very dad-like.

Great. How much? $2,350.

I give up – I'll take the vibrator. You're going to make an old man very happy.

Do say: "No, it's not a bottle opener – guess again!"

Don't say: "Dad! What are you doing with that portable espresso machine I bought you?"

'Men don't do deep emotional dis

Many middle-aged men have few or no close friends. Why do they find it harder to maintain relationships than women - and how can they start new ones? **Sam Wollaston** reports



'There is such camaraderie': Garrie Coleman (front) with members of his scooter club

Garrie Coleman joined the army at the age of 16 and left when he was 40. He spent his 24 years as an infantry soldier in the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, serving in Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Iraq and Cyprus, doing army things - including forming close friendships. "There is such camaraderie. You build these bonds," he says. "It's like a club: everyone going though the same kind of constraints and challenges."

After the army, he settled in Darlington, County Durham, because his wife has family there. But his friends were dispersed around the country and abroad. They're connected on social media, but that's not the same. Coleman missed the friendship.

The issues of adjusting to civvy street are much discussed and documented (Coleman still dreams about the army most nights). But this isn't about that; it's about men, middle age and mates. Or a lack of mates. And making new ones, hopefully.

A recent survey in the US found that men have fewer social ties than they used to, with just 27% saying they have at least six close friends. In 1990, this figure was 55%. During that period, the number of men reporting no close friendships has risen from 3% to 15%. In the UK, research by the Movember Foundation in 2018 found 27% of men said they had no close friends at all. The organisation also reported that friendships become less strong as men get older, with 22% of men aged 55 and over saying they never see their friends. It would seem there is, for men at least, a friendship recession.

Dr Robin Dunbar, an anthropologist and evolutionary psychologist, and a top researcher into friends and friendship, says that, though some might not want to believe it, men's and women's friendships are different. Women's tend to be more personalised and dyadic: who you are is the most important thing. "Men's friendships are more clubby, and in some sense anonymous - it matters more what you are than who you are," he says. "In other words, do you belong to my club? If you do, that qualifies you to be a friend, and anybody who ticks that box can be substituted in if you don't turn up or go off to Thailand for ever, or whatever. A lot of men's friendships seem to be built around activities, so conversation is quite unimportant, and is largely designed to trigger laughter as much as anything else. Men don't do deep emotional discussions about friendships."

Chaps, I'm afraid we are simple, shallow creatures. It doesn't really matter who we make friends with, but it's easier to do so if they also like golf/football/canoeing or whatever it is. And there's more bad news from Dunbar. "Because men are inherently socially lazy, when they start to lose friendships, they find it more difficult to recreate them."

In our late teens and 20s, no problem: we just go out and make new friends; the social world is built around our demands. In our 30s, into our 40s, we might make friends at the school gate, with the parents of our children's pals. After that, it gets harder, especially if you get divorced and immediately lose at least half your friends. "At that stage, you're running out of energy and motivation; it's an effort to get up and go out to places where you don't know people and don't know what people talk about any more. If you're not a complete extrovert, there's a resistance to putting yourself in that awkward situation, so networks contract," says Dunbar.

This matters because, he says, and studies have shown, the single biggest predictor of our psychological health and wellbeing, our physical health and wellbeing, and even how much longer we're going to live, is the number of close friendships and family relationships we have.

Don't despair. It might get harder, but it's not impossible. We asked readers - men in middle age - to tell us about making new friends. Sean MacBride-Stewart first met his bestie, Luis, at the school gate 10 years ago when they were both in their mid-40s - but it was during the pandemic that things picked up. They started exercising together, throwing medicine balls at each other in the park. "Lockdown was hard; this was a nice thing to come out of it," MacBride-Stewart tells me.

He says it helped that they are both extroverts, because they did talk, and they bonded over common ground, such as being raised Catholic, doing PhDs in middle age, and being immigrants in Edinburgh: Sean is from New Zealand, Luis from Cape Verde via Portugal.



'It's been a joy to get to know him': Luis and Sean met at the school gate

In some ways, being somewhere you didn't grow up makes it easier. "If you come here as an adult, it might not be so easy to make friends with the people already here," says MacBride-Stewart. "But you would with people who have made the same life choice as you have, which is to move to a city and fall in love with it."

He says he has learned a lot from his friend: about Portuguese colonial history, about Cape Verde, and "about what it's like for him being black and living in Portugal and here, all the microaggressions that happen to him".

They don't see each other as often as they did at the height of the pandemic, but they still throw medicine balls at each other in the park, and there's talk of a triathlon. "My friend is very important to me now," says MacBride-Stewart. "It's been a joy to get to know him."

Lots of the respondents to

> **It's an effort to get up and go out to places where you don't know people and what they talk about any more**

cussions'



PHOTOGRAPHS: CHRISTOPHER OWENS/THE GUARDIAN

the reader callout confirm what Dunbar says about the clubbiness of male friendships and that they are often built around activities. Steve in Herefordshire found new friends through rediscovering role-playing games, the best known of which is Dungeons & Dragons (D&D): "There's a wide community of people out there who were teenagers during the first flowering of Dungeons & Dragons in the UK," he says. "The pattern seems to be: an early obsession as a teenager, going into a 'deep freeze' as career and family take over, followed by a rediscovery in middle age that there is still fun to be had in creative gaming experiences. I've made strong friendships with other like-minded people, which I would never have done without this shared fascination. During the pandemic, the ability to game online was a life-saver."

I'm starting to think D&D is taking over, because it's the same story for Mark in east London. "I don't maintain work friendships and have always felt socially awkward," he says. "Playing D&D has meant I can disengage from work, family and financial worries and find a way to express my creative impulses. I am probably the oldest member of the group but, during a game night, I feel less old and generationally remote, and have been able to reconnect with an activity that helped keep me sane during my adolescence."

There are alternatives. For Roland in Vienna, it's badminton. Nick in south London plays in a walking football club, the Crystal Palace Dinosaurs. Wayne in Norfolk skateboards. "There's a whole crew of old dudes," he says. "Everyone is super-friendly and we have many laughs." For Peter in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, it's simple: "I'm a musician; making friends is easy. I just join a band or three."

And for someone in West Sussex who wishes to remain anonymous, the club is a swingers' one. "I found the sex I was looking for, but more importantly I found swinger socials - get-togethers in pubs where like-minded people just mingle. On my first visit I was scared, but found everyone to be friendly and welcoming. I now have a wide circle of acquaintances and a small circle of very good friends. We socialise, we go to gigs, we eat out; I've never been more content. Oh, and my sex life is pretty good, too!" Lovely.

Back in Darlington, Coleman was into the mod scene before joining the army, and listened to the Jam when he was a young man. So he got back into it, bought a scooter and joined a scooter club at a nearby seaside resort. "I soon found I was in a group that was into the whole music scene - from 60s soul to Britpop, as well as all things scooter. There are a few other veterans, and it's a great outlet to spin anecdotes. I've made a good few close friends: Darren, Mark, Marc with a C and Ralph."

Coleman thinks friends are more important than ever in middle age. He is now 54. As well as being about having a laugh, it's also about support. "We always have a little nod to each other, like: 'That guy's putting on a happy face but there's stuff going on.' Ten, 15 years ago, it wouldn't have crossed my mind, but now you're sort of: 'He's having a bit of a hard time so let's just look after him.'"

Some scooter clubs have a bad name. Theirs is open and friendly. It doesn't matter what football team they support - they welcome people from all over the country. Women too! What about rockers, Garrie? "Do you know what, I might draw the line there."



GETTY IMAGES (POSED BY MODELS)

Ask Anita

My husband and I are separating - but he doesn't want anyone to know

My husband and I no longer have romantic feelings for each other and have agreed to separate. However, my husband is paid much less than me and can't afford to live separately, so we have agreed to live together as a family with our seven-year-old daughter for the time being. I worry that this is confusing for her and will have a negative impact. It would be better if we could explain it to her, but my husband does not want to tell his family or friends that we are no longer together. I would like our separation to be more formalised, but my husband has severe mental health problems and I worry about the result of pushing him to be more honest with his family and friends.

I feel this is forcing me and my daughter to live a lie. I can't move on with my life because I feel forced to pretend everything is fine. What should I do? Keep pretending, as the risk to my husband's mental health is too great, or make a stand and push for a proper separation?

Anita Chaudhuri replies: Is it possible for a separating couple to carry on living under the same roof and make it work? "It usually only works in the short term," advises Ammanda Major, the head of clinical practice at Relate. "The boundaries people put around themselves soon start to get ragged. Arguments break out over who is doing what in the house, dating, new partners, money. Even in amicable splits, people usually reach the point of thinking: 'You know what? I don't want to look at your face every day, I need to get out of here.' Couples counselling can help. And a lot will depend on the attitude of family and friends, which really affects how people are able to manage."

> "Explain that maintaining secrecy could be detrimental for your child

This brings us to the issue of your husband's desire for secrecy. A superficial conclusion might be that he is in denial. However, I wonder if there could be a religious or cultural consideration involved, or another reason he might fear family disapproval? Whatever his motivation, you need to discuss it.

"Explain that maintaining secrecy could be detrimental for your child," says Major. "The really important thing is that you talk to her and explain what is happening together. Avoid putting her in the position of being your confidante. Children need to be able to love each parent equally. Be mindful of developmental stages and the age-appropriateness of what you tell them."

Your caring nature is evident in your concern that "living a lie" will protect your husband's mental health, but is that accurate? Perhaps, if he let his loved ones know the truth, they could offer practical and emotional help.

Jo Kierstead, an accredited psychotherapeutic counsellor, says: "The best help you can give your husband is to encourage him to broaden his support systems. Be open and compassionate and avoid criticism towards his mental health issues. Be clear about your commitment for a positive future - that your support is there, but it is not infinite. Point him towards the mental health charity Mind or his GP, or suggest he utilises a non-judgmental helpline or listening service."

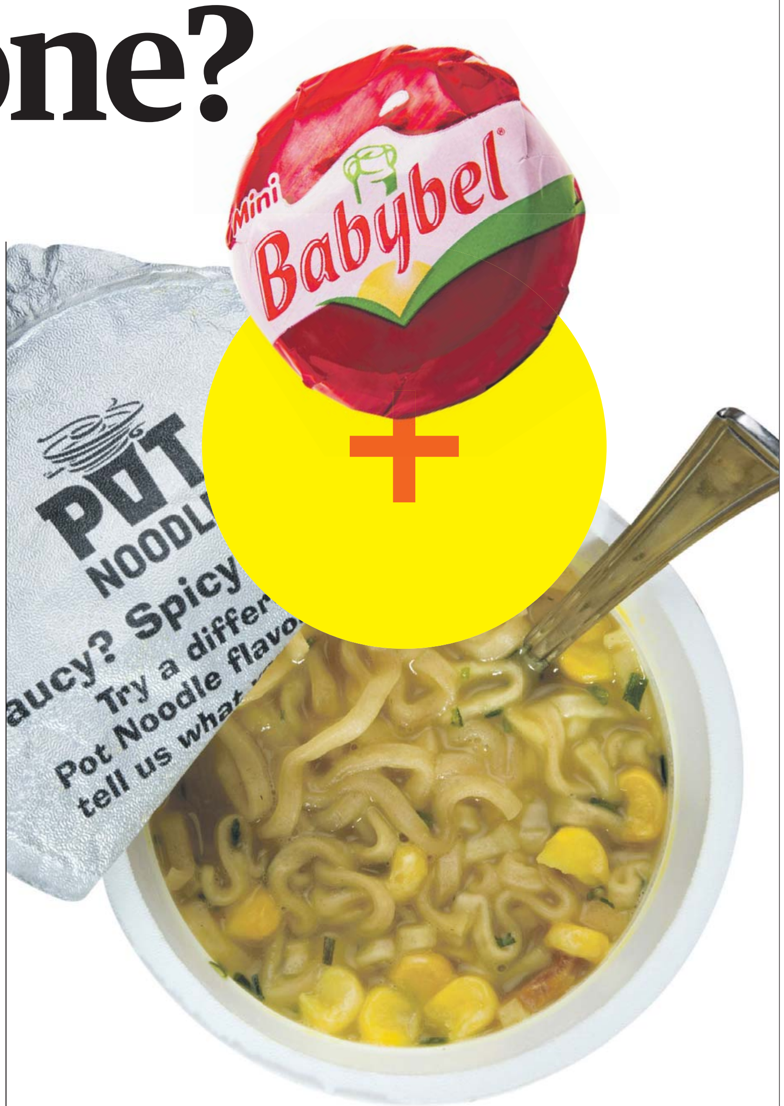
How can you ensure he is supported while also addressing your own needs? "Be mindful of the toll this is taking on you and make sure you're prioritising your mental health," says Kierstead. "Despite how it may feel, you are not alone and your situation is not for ever, so try to give yourself the kindness, care and support you need to manage each day as it comes."

You don't mention who initiated the split or why, but it sounds as if you may have played the role of "rescuer", as well as financial provider, and now imagine that your husband won't be able to cope without you. If this is the case, I urge you to read Hello Beautiful by Ann Napolitano - a novel that explores love, depression and second chances. It offers a compassionate reminder that people are endlessly surprising, as is life - wisdom we can all embrace.

If you would like advice from Anita, go to theguardian.com/ask-anita

Malteasers in red wine, anyone?

Away from their restaurants, chefs improvise in extraordinary ways. Here, some of Britain's best cooks tell **Tony Naylor** about the killer combos they wouldn't dare put on their menus



Chefs are grazing animals, forever playing with ingredients, nibbling at leftovers and then, back home at 1am, trying to conjure a quick bite from whatever is there. In these moments of curiosity and urgency, bizarre snack habits are born. "People think we go home and have elaborate dinners, but give me some string cheese, chilli sauce, a Fab and a Stella and I'll be happy," says Jack Stein, the chef director at the Rick Stein group. At work, chefs are surrounded by the finest ingredients. At home, they frequently crave "simple things", he says.

"You never think about your own fridge and what you're going to feed yourself," says Meriel Armitage, the founder of the Club Mexicana restaurants in London. So when chefs arrive home "really late and really hungry", they improvise - in extraordinary ways. "I guess we're confident in putting weird combos together that most people would be quite scared of," she says.

She is not wrong. From Pot Noodle hacks to radical fusions of sweet and savoury, chefs frequently eat things they would never dream of putting on a menu - as the following examples show.

Vanilla ice-cream and wasabi peas

The origin of this curveball is one many will recognise. "I was bored in lockdown," says Ramael Scully. A chef with too much time on his hands and too many wasabi peas in his cupboards, the co-owner of Scully restaurant in St James's, central London, decided to crush and sprinkle them over vanilla ice-cream. "The plain flavour and creaminess of the vanilla works beautifully with exhilarating wasabi," he says. "Close your eyes and you could be eating cream and horseradish, one of my favourite flavour combos. And the colour contrast looks great."



Buried Babybel Pot Noodle

Tom Aronica, the chef at Bench restaurant in Sheffield, was doing a guest cooking slot at Belzan in Liverpool when, in a moment of post-service giddiness, he revealed this trick - developed with a student housemate - to his host, Belzan's Sam Grainger. This "top-tier weirdness" will "change your life", promises Grainger.

Take one chicken and mushroom Pot Noodle, remove the noodles, drop in a Babybel, reinsert the noodles and add hot water. "It's like those ice-creams with chewing gum at the bottom, except it's a cheesy, melted delight in a Pot Noodle," says Grainger. "It's a glorious, go-to snack."

Wotsits with black pepper sriracha

Chefs love to jazz up crisps. Si Toft, the chef-owner at the Dining Room in the Welsh village of Abersoch, seasons Quavers with Worcestershire sauce ("Quick shake to disperse, not saturate"), while, in Northumberland, Pine's head chef, Ian Waller, can be found dipping Wotsits into black pepper chilli sauces, such as Flying Goose's sriracha. "This was a Saturday night desperation snack. You'll try anything zero-effort after a long shift," says Waller. It proved revelatory: "Spicy, cheesy, umami, delicious." Other srirachas work to varying degrees, but the Wotsits' interaction with a black pepper version is "world class", he says.



Jacob's cracker, cream cheese, strawberry jam

Adam Reid, the chef at the French in Manchester, has been topping crackers with cream cheese and strawberry jam since childhood. "I don't think it's that out-there; it's like cheese and chutney," he says, adding that the jam should be used with restraint: "It's more of a savoury thing with a sweet kick."



Gherkin-clad skinny fries

For fastidious chefs, shaking vinegar on to chips is far too haphazard. At A Peculiar Tea in Belfast, when skinny fries are served at staff meals, they arrive with a side of thinly sliced dill pickles, which you can fold around a fry or two. That way, you get double crunch and guaranteed vinegary tang in every bite. "You can't ask for more than that," says the chef patron, Gemma Austin.

Pom-Bear and Dairy Milk sandwich

A performer friend, "always on the lookout for a quick, mid-show snack", introduced Sami Harvey, the chef at the Laundry in Brixton, south London, to the delicacy that is a square of Dairy Milk sandwiched between the bellies of two Pom-Bear crisps. "Sweet, salty, crisp outside, soft in the middle; it ticks all the boxes," she says. "Squeeze the mini-sandwich together so the chocolate starts to soften."



Vanilla ice-cream and pickles

It first happened in McDonald's - an accidental meeting of gherkin and McFlurry that revealed to Lungile Mhlanga, the owner of the Treats Club in Shoreditch, east London, "how good they were together". Acting in a similar way to the salt in salted caramel, a salty pickle "balances the ice-cream perfectly", she says. Use pickles with a sweeter flavour profile, such as Kühne's sweet and sour gherkins, and you may well be taken aback by the result: "It's a 'don't knock it till you've tried it' snack I swear by."

Vegan instant noodle sandwich

To achieve this double-carb heaven, shop around for what Club Mexicana's Armitage calls a "ninja vegan product" - vegan "chicken" noodles. (Tesco and Sainsbury's do own-brand versions.) At home, she likes to



boost these with chilli flakes, sesame seeds and spring onions, before slapping them between slices of white bread; vegan butter is optional. Drain the noodles, but not too much: "You want a bit of juice - that's where the flavour is and it'll soak into the bread. These expand in your stomach like you've had a feast."

Mash sandwiches

Talking of double carbs, in his early days in hotel kitchens, Gopi Chandran, the executive chef at Sopwell House in St Albans, would often find himself making mashed potato, which he took to munching between slices of burnt toast leftover at breakfast: "I added chopped bacon, mayonnaise, cheddar. Then the sauce chef made a fresh fish batter. I'd dip the whole sandwich in and fry it. The ultimate! We'd cut this into triangles, alongside triple-cooked duck fat chips. Now I make a fresh mash sandwich with bacon and jalapeños."

Pringles with caviar

For years, Alex Webb - who has an eponymous restaurant at the InterContinental London Park Lane - has been dipping Pringles into leftover sauces and purees as a post-service snack. But sour cream and chive Pringles with caviar stays with him as a dream coupling. When he worked at a different restaurant, he even served this combo as a canapé with crème fraîche and fresh chives. "The fishiness of the eggs and the saltiness work well together. Pringles are quite addictive anyway; adding caviar brings it to another level."

Red-wine Maltesers

A friend taught Grace Bryson, the chef at London Shell Co in Highgate, to pop a Malteser in her glass of red to create "a little treat" that she has grown to love. She recommends using a rich, full-bodied red. Wine aficionados, however, may need some persuading. "You should have seen the look my sommelier gave me when I mentioned it," she says. "She was fuming. Proper death stare."

Sushi-seasoned fries

Judy Joo, the founder of the Seoul Bird restaurants in London, likes to use sushinoko, a dehydrated vinegar and seasoning powder designed to dress sushi, "sprinkled liberally on fries. With a hint of sweetness, it's the ultimate salt and vinegar."

Fried egg and apricot jam sandwiches

Long before he became the executive chef at the Riding House cafes in London, Henry Omereye worked in a factory making takeaway boxes. One morning, in the canteen, he ordered fried eggs, toast and apricot jam - intending to eat them separately - but, after realising he was running late, combined the lot and wolfed it down: "It just worked. I've been having that for breakfast every once in a while since. Everyone looks at me weird, like: 'What you doing?' but it tastes amazing. For some reason, the jam seems to heighten the flavour of the egg."

French's mustard on Ryvita with Oxo dip

"Chefs are surrounded by food all their working life. At midnight, at home, it's different. You want a naughty fix," says Neil Bentinck, the chef-owner at Skosh in York. Mustard-topped Ryvita is quick and tasty, he says: "I'll eat that, stick my hand in a jar of pickled chillies and, if it's Friday night, I might treat myself to a bit of cheese, raw vegetables and an Oxo cube." Sorry, an Oxo cube? "I'll sprinkle an Oxo - the classic chicken one tastes best - and dip cucumber, carrot or celery into it. It's like umami salt."



Pot Noodle nachos

"My snacking habits are normal, to me," says Scott Smith, the head chef at the Oarsman in Marlow. But, like his wife, you may struggle to understand his fondness for dunking oatcakes in Bisto gravy seasoned with cracked white pepper ("That's class") or his habit of tipping a Pot Noodle over Doritos. "The dream combo is Cool Original Doritos with a Bombay Bad Boy," he says. "But, to be honest, they all work."

Cheesestrings and Frank's Red Hot

In the mid-00s, Stein drove around the US exploring barbecue food. During the trip, he picked up the habit of dipping one new discovery - Cheesestrings - into another: hot cayenne or chilli sauces. "It's a mild cheese; it needs a lift," he says. "String it really efficiently, then just dip it into the top of the bottle."

'Sad salad' sandwich

Ever wondered what to do with yesterday's lemon-and-oil-dressed green salad? "Do not throw out wilted, lemony greens," orders Jacob Kenedy, the creator of Bocca di Lupo and Plaquemine Lock in London. Instead, sandwich the leaves between slices of dense, buttered brown bread. "The crispy-limp, lemon-oily, bittersweet leaves are delicious against creamy butter and earthy brown bread. Nothing sad about it at all," he says.

Chocolate fudge cake and feta cheese

An accidental early convert to the amplified flavours of salty chocolate, Kemal Demirasal used to eat this sweet, umami duo as an after-school snack. "The saltiness of the feta against the chocolate makes you salivate. To me, it's a killer combination," says the chef-founder at the Counter in Notting Hill, west London.

Frozen bocconcini and honey

Little frozen balls of mild and creamy fior di latte (cow's milk) mozzarella, preferably dipped in rosemary honey, are "just like ice-cream bombes," according to Masha Rener, the head chef at Lina Stores in London.

Salty fries and McDonald's milkshakes

You may think this is an urban myth, a TikTok trend or something only American children do, but chefs are on board. "Strawberry milkshake kind of makes sense. Strawberries and tomatoes have many shared [flavour] components. It's like having ketchup, but with temperature contrast," says Chet Sharma, the chef-founder at BiBi in Mayfair, west London. Liz Cottam, the owner of Home in Leeds, agrees that the sweet, creamy and salty combo is "a vibe". She has gone even further; she loves dipping fries in the caramel-adjacent sauce dulce de leche.

Walkers Sensations Thai sweet chilli crisps and Haribo Tangfastics

Robert Pearce, the executive chef at Down Hall hotel in Essex, was at a family party when he made this bold culinary breakthrough. "One of the kids had mixed them together. I knew chilli and chocolate go well together, so I thought I'd try it and it ended up being quite nice." There is a tension between salty, sour and sweetness in this chaotic mix: "They almost cut through each other, but you still get the chilli heat at the end." There is an added bonus, too: "Once it's all mixed in a bowl, no one wants to share with you."



PHOTOGRAPHS: RUSSELL HART/STUDIOMODE/HERA FOOD/IFMC/ZOONAR/ANDREW TWORT/MARTIN LEE/STUDIOSHOTS/ALAMY



'I'm not an ego diva' … Chetwynd with one of her creatures

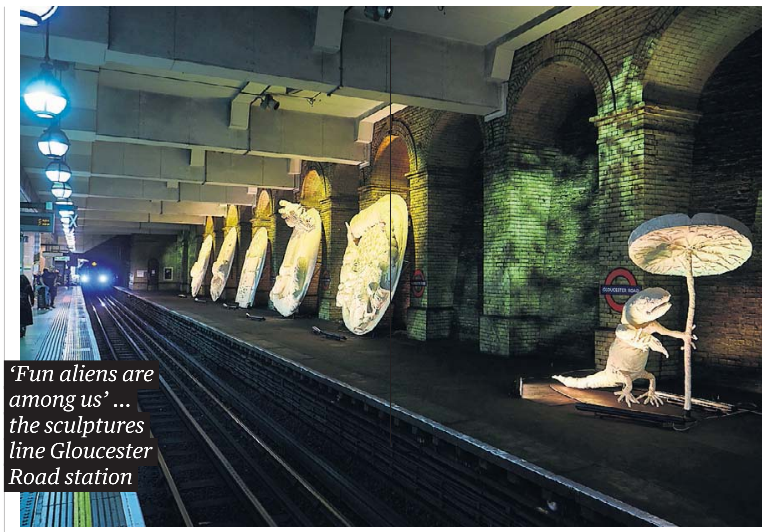
Stand clear of the closing jaws

Why has the London underground been invaded by giant amphibians? Tube fanatic, 'fact-hungry witch' and occasional nudist Monster Chetwynd gives **Tim Jonze** the ride of his life

It's rush hour, but not as you know it. On a disused train platform, a gathering of giant toads, lizards and salamanders are causing quite a stir. Groups of schoolchildren stand and point, tourists pose for selfies and sleepy commuters squint in bafflement. It's fun standing on the platform and clocking the expressions on passenger's faces as they trudge down the stairs of London's Gloucester Road tube station only to be confronted by their new amphibian travel companions.

"Normally my work is linked to bad taste and disarming humour," says Monster Chetwynd, the artist behind the sculptures. "But these look oddly delicate, almost like Wedgwood porcelain." While Chetwynd's trademark childlike charm is present in the works, they're less outrageous than some previous pieces. This, after all, is an artist who is making an ongoing film project - Hermito's Children, begun in 2008 - about a transgender detective trying to solve the case of a woman who orgasms herself to death on a dildo seesaw. She also created a gothic, monochrome softplay centre called The Idol (sadly now closed due to Covid, rather than the fact it looked terrifying), lit up Tate Britain with gigantic, luminescent mating slugs and painted a wall with her bare bottom.

Chetwynd's works are often


'Fun aliens are among us' … the sculptures line Gloucester Road station

performance based. She might rope in friends, family or random people she recently met to dress up in handmade costumes of warped woodland creatures or ancient historical figures and prance around looking like they're having a blast. In one, they walk from London to Dover dressed as Dickensian street urchins, making the link between Victorian debt prisons and modern credit card culture along the way. In another, a man metamorphoses into a potato in tribute to the artist Eduardo Paolozzi.

And this latest commission - for Transport for London's Art on the Underground series - comes with a film called Pond Life: Albertopolis and the Lily, in which Chetwynd adopts the role of a "fact-hungry witch". Dressed in a sparkly pink bodysuit and wild blond wig, she travels via tube and broom to investigate colonialism, the history of the Amazonian lily and the nature of truth.

Being Monster Chetwynd - who was born Alalia Chetwynd but changed her first name to Spartacus, then to Marvin Gaye,


Change here for amphibians … a view from inside the tube

then Monster - seems like a lot of fun. But as she points out, the finished works don't show all the 5am starts, the mad rush to sew costumes or the immense amount of research they require. "I'm determined and dogged," she says. "Because I know what it takes to make something effortless and light and joyous."

We're speaking in the station control room, a tiny office crammed with hi-vis jackets. Chetwynd is dressed in her witch costume today, complete with smeared black mouth paint, and she is great, if rather unusual, company. Typical quote: "You're probably not interested in this story, but I kind of don't really care." She has a tendency to go off on tangents (Estonian attitudes to breastfeeding) but she does answer questions in great detail. Just not always the ones I've asked. "I know I annoy a lot of people," she says at one point, laughing. "I've got a lot of friends who say, 'Oh God, I can't cope with you. I can't even be *friends* with you!'"

Chetwynd loves the tube, though her stories of why are a little outré. "I remember seeing a person on there who was sweating blood," she says. "And I also saw a person who had six fingers. So they were reading a newspaper and using their sixth finger to hold the pages in an interesting way. That felt quite Men in Black - like there's lots of fun aliens among us. If only!"

This new underground installation was inspired by the 1851 Great Exhibition in nearby Hyde Park, a soaraway world's fair that helped raise funds to build the great educational buildings on Exhibition Road. It harks back to a time when Britain was an international powerhouse, but that doesn't interest Chetwynd, who cares more about the craft that went into building Joseph Paxton's gigantic Crystal Palace, which housed the exhibition. "To read that each pane of glass was individually hand blown - I get really genuinely excited about things like that."

Chetwynd's unconventional art arose from an unconventional upbringing. Her father Rupert, who died in 2021, was a captain

PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID LEVENE/THE GUARDIAN



in the Grenadier Guards and an adventurer who brought medical supplies into Afghanistan, while her mother Luciana Arrighi was an Oscar-winning set designer. The family travelled around in campervans – Hong Kong, Australia, Malaysia, Pakistan – absorbing the world. Yet by the time she was 10, Monster still couldn't read or write. "I remember people being shocked that I didn't know the alphabet," she recalls. "But I had incredible confidence – and no understanding that they thought I was inferior for not knowing something they held very highly."

Chetwynd describes her upbringing as a kind of experiment, although if she weren't laughing as she told the story it might sound rather cold: "My parents are meritocrats, and they were very upfront about the fact that they just weren't going to bother with us if we weren't bright." She recalls being sent for intelligence tests with her brother. Only after scoring highly were they "patted on the back and told we'd have a bright future".

After various encounters with inspirational teachers – including one who apparently walked into the classroom on his hands only to flip over and start reading poems – Chetwynd studied social anthropology and ancient history at University College London before training in art. That first degree still influences her work, with much of it based on arcane ritual: colourful, costumed carnivals that run amok in the fresh air, free from the stilted confines of the gallery.

> **I pretended I lived in a nudist colony and the Tate went and put it on the wall text – just like that!**

In 2012, Chetwynd became the first performance artist to be nominated for the Turner prize. Her solo show at the time was Odd Man Out, which involved voting booths, a puppet re-enactment of the story of Jesus and Barabas, along with an inflatable slide between levels of the gallery. But she also enjoyed messing with the very fabric of the award itself. "I pretended that I lived in a nudist colony," she says. "And they went and put it on the wall text, just like that."

The story must have stuck, I say, because I'd read that she really did live in a nudist commune – by a nature reserve in Nunhead, London. "Well, that was more like a communal flat," she says. "It wasn't like 20 people, it was five. And we weren't nude *all* the time because it was cold – only if it was fun and warm." Well that clears that up, then.

Chetwynd was pregnant when she was nominated for the Turner and her son Dragon was three months old at the time of the award ceremony. (The prize went to Elizabeth Price.) There are debates currently around providing more support for artists with children, but Chetwynd doesn't think being a parent inhibits her output. "I'm quite defiant about stuff like this," she says. "The problem with having meritocratic, workaholic parents is that I would say that artists don't need chaperoning and don't need support and don't need to be given all this stuff, because it's like – they're just going to do it regardless.

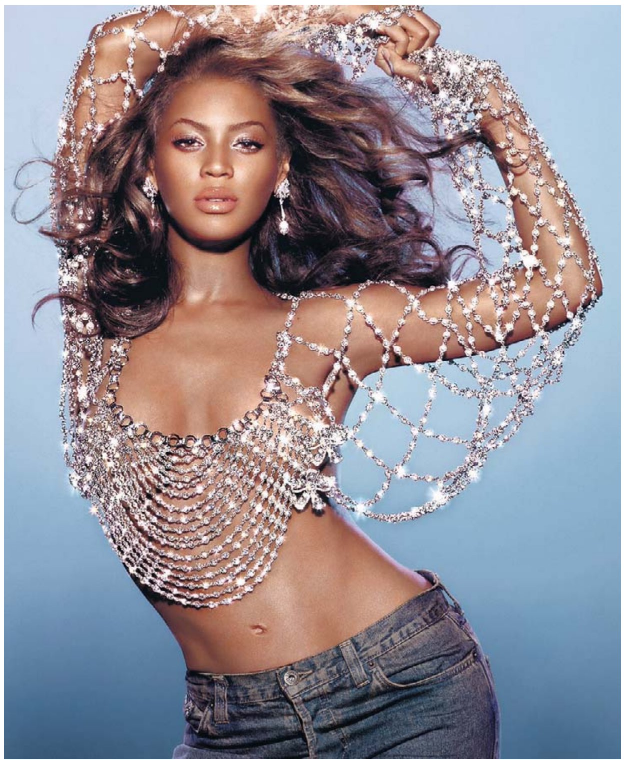
"But I have to be careful because, although I was raised in caravans, I was constantly told I could do anything I wanted. It was sort of this nightmarish whisper, 'You can do anything, *anything*.' So there's part of me that thinks I am going to do whatever I want and no one's going to stop me. And then you put that together and realise it comes from quite dark politics."

Chetwynd is currently based in Zurich, where she has a post at the university, and is transforming her unused parking space into a miniature art exhibition. But she will return to the UK this summer for a show at Mount Stuart House on the Isle of Bute on Scotland's west coast, inspired by its moth population. Her eyes light up talking about the elephant hawk moth ("bright green and pink and shaped like a Harrier bomber") and the garden tiger moth ("It has the ability to outwit bats with sonar!").

In fact, much like her stories about tube adventures (the screaming woman who needed directions, the elderly lady licking boyband posters), she can talk about moths at surprising length. Chetwynd just has an insatiable lust for life, for people, for nature, for stories. "I know it looks like I'm an ego diva," she says, gesturing at her outlandish outfit, "but I'm a real observer. I actually spend a lot of time being an audience member – of *life*."

Markus Klinko

'Beyoncé didn't want to pair the diamond top with a skirt as it would look too red carpet. She liked the idea of jeans but hadn't brought any. So I gave her mine'



I was a classical concert harpist before I became a photographer. I studied at the Paris conservatoire and signed with EMI Classics. Then, in 1994, aged 33, a hand injury prevented me from playing. I made a quick decision to do something else and that's how I became a photographer – despite the fact I had never owned a camera. I had read a book about photography but that was it. I sold all my harps and spent $100,000 on photo equipment before ever taking a picture. I locked myself in my apartment, got a store mannequin and just started practising with the same intensity I had done with the harp.

In the beginning, because I had been a musician, I wasn't interested in shooting musicians. I only wanted to shoot sexy models. My dream was to shoot for Playboy. But just a few years later, it was the music industry that reached out to me. I didn't want to do it but my agent was screaming at me to, saying: "You're crazy!"

I shot Beyoncé for the first time in 2000 for Vibe magazine, when she was part of Destiny's Child. I knew she was a superstar right away. She walked in and I said to her mother, Tina, who was styling the shoot: "This one in the middle here, she's going to be a huge star." Tina looked at me like: "Yeah, we know." After that, things really started taking off with music shoots.

In 2003, Beyoncé asked me to shoot the cover of her debut solo album, Dangerously in Love. She mentioned a campaign I'd done showing Laetitia Casta lying on a diamond-studded spider's web. Beyoncé wanted something similar, but smaller. When they arrived for the shoot – and again her mother was styling her – I pointed at the diamond top as they brought out all the outfits and said: "That's exactly what we discussed."

But Beyoncé was reluctant because her mother had only brought skirts to pair it with, and she felt it would make the look too red carpet. I suggested she pair it with jeans. She liked that idea but they hadn't brought any. So I gave her mine – on that famous, iconic cover, she is wearing my jeans! People ask if that meant I wasn't wearing any trousers while shooting her, but I was – I had another pair, luckily. A few months later, she returned the jeans. She'd had them cleaned and they were nicely wrapped with a ribbon.

In 2003, Beyoncé was not the Beyoncé she is now. She was still a young girl from a group. While she was well-known, she wasn't the biggest pop star in the world. She was friendly and professional on set. She is a hard worker and an intuitive and intelligent model. She knows what to do. The pose on the cover just happened – it was not me directing her. She just snapped into it and I knew immediately that this was the shot.

The final image was totally the vision I had for her: this sexy, glossy look that I felt represented her best. I didn't want to do anything low-key or lo-fi with daylight. But that top did not look exactly how it does on the cover: there was a lot of post-production and manipulation. It was much more flimsy than it appears and it wasn't staying strategically in place – she's not wearing anything other than those strings of diamonds, so she was pretty much topless on set. Later, in post-production, everything was perfected and arranged to make sure nothing shows.

There's a magic on set that either happens or it doesn't. I think it has a lot to do with the connection between the subject and the photographer. It's not about being best friends: it's about an energy that has to be there. With Beyoncé, that energy seemed to naturally happen.

For me, this image projected who Beyoncé was about to become. She wasn't quite the person that the photos represented, but within a couple of years she had become that iconic, undeniable superstar. The photoshoot created a road map to where she was headed.

Interview by Michael Cragg. Beyoncé's Renaissance world tour is at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, London, 29 May to 4 June

The CV

Born: *Winterthur, Switzerland, 1961*
Trained: *Self-taught*
Influences: *'Andy Warhol is my role model for career management and business strategy. I also love Helmut Newton.'*
High point: *'Now! I have 10 exhibitions this year.'*
Low point: *'The financial crash in 2007-8 prompted budget cuts and suddenly I was considered way too expensive. I didn't react quick enough it allowed the social media photographers to take over the advertising jobs.'*
Top tip: *'Don't be impatient. The competition is fierce and you'll have to prove yourself again and again. But don't get discouraged.'*





Reunited … Rose Byrne and Seth Rogen in Platonic

Review Platonic, Apple TV+

Seth Rogen and Rose Byrne are the best of friends in a near ideal comedy

★★★★☆

Lucy Mangan



Roughly 800 years ago, in 1989, the mighty Nora Ephron used When Harry Met Sally to pose a question: can men and women really be just friends? Her answer was, in essence, no. Apple TV+'s new series Platonic, created by husband and wife Nicholas Stoller (Bad Neighbours) and Francesca Delbanco (Friends from College), posits that the answer these days might be yes.

The 10-part comedy reunites Bad Neighbours co-stars Rose Byrne and Seth Rogen, who first made a fine double-act in that movie a decade ago. Byrne plays Sylvia, a lawyer who decided to be a stay-at-home mum and now, 13 years on, is wondering if she was wise to do so. Rogen is Will, a recently divorced brewery owner with a hipster bar, who is trying to be content with "selling quality product made with integrity to people on Hinge dates and pretty well-to-do alcoholics", but is given to kicking over any electric scooters he passes and finding excuses to contact his ex.

At college, Sylvia and Will were best friends (without benefits, it is established early on) and remained so close afterwards that Will was "maid of honour" at Sylvia's wedding to handsome fellow lawyer and soon to be proven very patient and understanding man, Charlie (Luke Macfarlane). They fell out five years ago when Sylvia voiced the opinion that he shouldn't marry his fiance. When she hears they have divorced, Charlie urges her to get back in touch. A beautifully awkward reunion over coffee ensues. "You still," asks Will, to break another silence, "got that family of yours?" She shows him pictures. "Cool," he says, trying hard. "They look healthy."

Eventually, the ice melts and they fall back into their old ways. At first, this means trying to recapture their youth by drinking shots, getting high, bleaching their hair, stealing lizards and talking nonsense in diners (can women be warmongers, asks Sylvia. Of course they can, says Will - just look at Bloody Mary, Margaret Thatcher, Cara Delevingne). But gradually it returns to the real roots of friendship, except this time they are able to guide each other - albeit not entirely smoothly - through their midlife crises. Their knowledge of each other gives them a perspective no one else can bring to the party. Or non-party, as Rose is finding early middle age to be.

Platonic does a lot of lovely and rarely seen things. It doesn't denigrate marriage, although it acknowledges its peaks and troughs. It doesn't make Charlie boring or villainous. It gives an equally meaty, equally comic, but emotionally resonant, part to its male and female stars (both of whom are brilliant in their solo scenes, and their chemistry together is even more of a joy to watch). It gives space to an undervalued and overlooked stage of life. It says that friendship is vitally important, that it comes in many forms and that it needn't be complicated or ruined by the intrusion of sex.

At one point, as Sylvia becomes caught up in the excitement of her renewed connection with Will, Charlie says: "I know Will and Sylvia aren't fucking. But it almost feels as if they are getting off on the fact that they could be fucking." But even he is speaking in a fit of insecurity, brought about by his colleagues' teasing, and overstating the case. Will and Sylvia are, and remain, "just" best friends. It is the writers' and performers' genius to make it clear to viewers that what is being examined and celebrated here is nothing more and nothing less than deep friendship.

Platonic provides a stream of equally brilliant peripheral characters and performances, too. Sylvia's mom-friend Katie (Carla Gallo) is a fine wingwoman before and after Will comes on the scene. When they go to a party full of unexpectedly young people, they dance their way through uncowed, singing: "We've got better credit than anyone in here! … Sorry! For existing!" Will's barmen, spacey Omar (Vinny Thomas) and practical Andy (Tre Hale), are great foils for him and for each other, and there are many other delights - the female partner at Charlie's firm with four children who congratulates Sylvia on being "so funny!", Will's 26-year-old (brief) girlfriend who meticulously explains the origins of Yolo - orbiting around the centre, which is firmly held by Byrne and Rogen playing gorgeously and apparently effortlessly off each other.

It is not quite the platonic ideal of a modern buddy comedy - some episodes are a bit baggy and drain momentum, although it always picks back up - but it's close.

What's On

Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

Strike: Inside the Unions
9pm, BBC Two



The UK is seeing the biggest wave of strikes in a generation, and this crucial two-parter goes behind the scenes to find out exactly what's happening. First, the RMT rail union, whose general secretary, Mick Lynch, says his piece along with those on the picket lines. The series also follows those involved with the Royal College of Nurses in a dispute that led nurses to withdraw their labour for the first time in the union's 106-year history. The government declined to take part.
Hollie Richardson

Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars
9pm, BBC One
Ramsay takes the three finalists to Ibrox stadium - where his football career with Glasgow Rangers ended and his cooking career started - to take on the last task that could win them a £150,000 investment. They will need to create a Scottish limited edition of their foodie products to prove themselves worthy business partners. **HR**

Last King of the Cross
9pm, Sky Max
Following a brutal opening episode, the messy Australian crime drama - which doesn't have the character depth to stop its violence and nudity from feeling gratuitous - continues. John (Lincoln Younes) looks to acquire his first bar.
Jack Seale

Open House: The Great Sex Experiment
10pm, Channel 4
The sexperiment continues, with childhood sweethearts Natalie and Tom wanting to spice up their relationship - will a hot tub with an open couple do the trick? Also, last week's couple, Chanice and Richardo, are still at the retreat - it probably takes a lot of time to organise an orgy for 15 people in your bedroom, to be fair. **HR**

Inside No 9
10pm, BBC Two
It is the last episode of this run of Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith's dark comedy anthology series - and what a stomach-churner it is. Longterm couple Joe and Chas head to their holiday home in the woods to make the most of their time together following Joe's cancer diagnosis. But things take a turn after a luxury mud bath. **HR**

Meet the Richardsons
10pm, Dave
The mid-marriage crisis meta-comedy continues and trouble looms in the shape of Jon's 40th birthday. He isn't a birthday enthusiast: "Fingers crossed I'll end up in a coma," he deadpans. Lucy has a series of stressful "treats" planned, including a private cooking lesson from a grumpy Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall.
Phil Harrison

BBC One

6.0 Breakfast (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** RHS Chelsea Flower Show (T) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 MasterChef (T) The hopefuls are asked to create a dish with an unlikely mix of ingredients.
9.0 Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars (T) After a last task at Ibrox Stadium, the final three face a grilling as each tries to convince Gordon to back them with a £150,000 investment.

10.0 News (T)
10.30 Regional News (T) Weather
10.40 Question Time (T) Fiona Bruce chairs the debate in Gravesend, Kent.
11.40 Newscast (T) A weekly round-up from Westminster, discussing the biggest stories in politics.
12.10 Weather for the Week Ahead (T) **12.15** News (T)

BBC Two

6.30 Money for Nothing (T) **7.15** Escape to the Country (T) **8.0** A Special School (T) **8.30** Caught Red Handed (T) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Food Map of Britain (T) (R) **2.45** A Countryside Summer (T) **3.15** Japan (T) **4.15** Ancient Invisible Cities (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) **6.0** House of Games (T) **6.30** Great Coastal Railway Journeys (T) **7.0** Brian Cox: Amol Rajan Interviews (T) **7.45** Grand Tours of Scotland's Lochs (T) (R)

8.0 RHS Chelsea Flower Show (T) More highlights from this year's event in London.
9.0 Strike: Inside the Unions (T) New series. Documentary about the wave of industrial action that engulfed the UK at the end of 2022, featuring access to union leaders including Mick Lynch and Pat Cullen.

10.0 Inside No 9 (T) A couple say goodbye. Last in the series.
10.30 Newsnight (T) Weather
11.15 11 Minutes: America's Deadliest Mass Shooting (T)
12.40 Sign Zone Dr Xand's Con Or Cure (T) (R) **1.25** Forensics: The Real CSI (T) (R) **2.25** Iolo's Borderlands (T) (R) **2.55** MasterChef (T) (R) **3.25** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 Good Morning Britain (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

8.30 Tonight: AI – What You Need to Know (T) Rachel Younger explores the promise and the perils of artificial intelligence and investigates if humankind can keep up with the machines.
9.0 It'll Be Alright on the Night (T) (R) Compilation of TV clangers, including Olly Murs' chair accident.

10.0 News (T) Weather
10.30 Local News (T) Weather
10.45 DNA Journey (T) (R) Actors Larry Lamb and Alison Steadman investigate their respective family histories.
11.50 All Elite Wrestling: Rampage (T) Fight action.
12.45 Shop: Ideal World 3.0 Bling (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Family Fortunes (T)

Channel 4

6.05 Countdown (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

8.0 24 Hours in A&E (T) (R) A 51-year-old builder is rushed into A&E after falling 18ft from scaffolding on to concrete, while an 86-year-old retired policeman is brought in with a head injury.
9.0 Taskmaster (T) Mae Martin immediately forgets the only rule of a task in a quasi-semi-final.

10.0 Open House: The Great Sex Experiment (T)
11.05 Naked Attraction (T) (R)
12.05 The World's Most Luxurious Holidays (T) (R) **1.05** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **1.55** FILM Slender Man (2018) (T) **3.30** Unreported World (T) (R) **3.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **4.50** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 Milkshake! 9.15 Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Saving Billy (Roxy Shih, 2021) (T) **4.0** Paul Martin's Antiques Showdown (T) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Jane McDonald: My Yorkshire (T) (R)

8.0 Bargain Loving Brits By the Sea (T) John and his daughter Thalia take their donkey business to the next level in Skegness.
9.0 Alexander Armstrong in Sri Lanka (T) The presenter embarks on the second leg of his adventure, beginning with a train journey to the mountain town of Haputale.

10.0 Killer at the Crime Scene (T)
11.05 Cause of Death (T) (R)
12.05 Police Interceptors (T) (R) **1.0** Teleshopping (T) **3.0** Inside the Tower of London (T) (R) **3.50** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.35** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **5.05** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.25** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 Railways: The Making of a Nation (T) (R) Liz McIvor examines class divisions on trains. **7.30** Fred Dibnah's Building of Britain (T) (R) Norman engineering techniques.

8.0 A House Through Time (T) (R) With David Olusoga.
9.0 Whoopi Goldberg: This Cultural Life (T) (R) The actor talks to John Wilson about the influences that shaped her career.
9.30 FILM The Color Purple (Steven Spielberg, 1985) (T) Drama, starring Whoopi Goldberg and Danny Glover.

11.55 Italy's Invisible Cities (T) (R) Alexander Armstrong and Michael Scott explore Venice to discover how it became one of the most powerful places in medieval Europe.
12.55 Hans Zimmer: Hollywood Rebel (T) (R) **1.55** Railways (T) (R) **2.25** Building of Britain (T) (R) **2.55** A House Through Time (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three
7.0pm Top Gear **8.0** MOTDx **8.30** MOTD Top 10: Dark Arts **9.0** Bad Education **10.0** Black Ops **10.30** Man Like Mobeen **11.40** Squad Goals: Britain's Youngest Football Boss **12.40** MOTDx **1.10** MOTD Top 10: Dark Arts **1.40** Man Like Mobeen **2.55** Bad Education

Dave
6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Secrets of the Supercars **8.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **9.0** Cop Car Workshop **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Long Weekends **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **10.0** Meet the Richardsons **10.40** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

E4
6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **8.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **10.30** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **11.30** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** The Big Bang Theory **2.30** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** The Big Celebrity Detox **10.0** Gogglebox **11.05** First Dates **12.10** The Big Celebrity Detox **1.15** Rick and Morty **1.50** Royal Crackers **2.15** Gogglebox **3.10** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.50** The Neighborhood

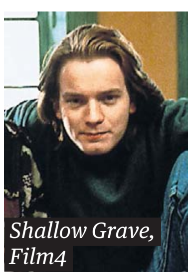
Film4
11.0am FILM The Running Man (1963) **1.10** FILM Tobruk (1967) **3.25** FILM Hatari! (1962) **6.35** FILM Gods of Egypt (2016) **9.0** FILM Men in Black II (2002) **10.45** FILM Shallow Grave (1994) **12.35** FILM Onoda: 10,000 Nights in the Jungle (2021)

ITV2
6.0am World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **7.30** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Gordon, Gino and Fred: European Road Trip **10.0** Family Guy **10.30** Family Guy **11.0** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.0** American Dad! **12.25** Bob's Burgers **12.55** Bob's Burgers **1.25** Superstore **1.55** Superstore **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.45** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

Sky Max
6.0am Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Supergirl **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Rob & Romesh vs Andy Murray **9.0** Last King of the Cross **10.05** Fantasy Island **11.05** Resident Alien **12.05** NCIS: Los Angeles **1.05** The Force: North East **2.0** Stop, Search, Seize **4.0** Highway Patrol **4.30** Road Wars **5.0** MacGyver

Sky Arts
6.0am André Rieu: Welcome to My World **7.0** André Rieu: Live in Brazil **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **10.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Lee Marvin **12.0** Julie Andrews Forever **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Art Traffickers: Treasures Stolen from the Tombs **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Anthony Quinn **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Discovering: Gary Cooper **8.0** Painting Birds With Jim and Nancy Moir **9.0** The Directors **10.0** Discovering Westerns on Film **11.30** Eric Clapton: Concert By the Lake - Band Du Lac **2.0** Joe Cocker: Mad Dogs & Englishmen **4.15** Bradley Wiggins on Mods **5.10** Video Killed the Radio Star **5.35** Video Killed the Radio Star

Sky Atlantic
6.0am Fish Town **7.55** The Wire **10.20** True Blood **12.30** Game of Thrones **1.35** Ray Donovan **3.45** The Wire **5.40** True Blood **7.50** Game of Thrones **9.0** Billions **11.15** Gangs of London **12.15** In Treatment **12.45** Game of Thrones **2.0** Der Pass **3.0** The L Word: Generation Q **4.10** Fish Town **5.05** Fish Town


Shallow Grave, Film4

Radio

Radio 3
6.30am Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Ligeti (4/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Pianist Clare Hammond plays music by Beethoven, Albéniz, Coleridge-Taylor and Hélène de Montgeroult at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Malmö Symphony Orchestra perform the first act of Hugo Alfvén's ballet-pantomime The Mountain King. Plus, Voces8 recorded at the Rheingau festival. **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. At Glasgow City Halls, Ryan Wigglesworth conducts the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and cellist Laura van der Heijden in R Strauss's Till Eulenspiegel, Cheryl Frances-Hoad's Cello Concerto (Earth, Sea, Air) and Elgar's Symphony No 2. **10.0** Free Thinking. How our understanding of smell and of sneezing has changed. **10.45** The Essay: Death in Trieste. A focus on Venice and echoes of Wincklemann's demise. (4/5) **11.0** The Night Tracks **11.30** Unclassified (R) **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4
6.0am Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** In Our Time **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: The West. By Naoíse Mac Sweeney. (4/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** From Our Own Correspondent (1/9) **11.30** Great Lives (R) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** You and Yours **12.30** Sliced Bread (3/10) **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Taking Issue With Shakespeare. Prof Emma Smith and Mercy Muroki explore what Shakespeare reveals about the monarchy. (4/5) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** Nightmare(ish). Drama, by Ollie George Clark. **3.0** Ramblings. Clare Balding visits Ashdown Forest with podcasters, bird mimics and conservationists. (2/7) **3.27** Radio 4 Appeal: Zambia Orphans Aid UK (R) **3.30** Open Book (R) **4.0** Princess. Anita Anand explores the complicated life of Princess Margaret. (8/10) **4.30** Inside Science **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** It's a Fair Cop (R) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** Law in Action (R) **8.30** The Patch. A random visit to Sunderland Point, Morecambe. (R) **9.0** Inside Science (R) **9.30** In Our Time **9.59** Weather **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece. By Tom Hanks. (9/10) **11.0** Rylan: How to Be a Man. Boxer Amir Khan talks to Rylan about masculinity. (2/10) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News and Weather **12.30** Book of the Week: The West (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News Briefing **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

Radio 4 Extra
6.0am Who Killed Zebedee? (1/2) **6.30** The Wolf Far Hence (4/6) **7.0** In My Mind's Eye (4/5) **7.15** Dead Cert (4/5) **7.30** On the Rocks (1/4) **8.0** The Burkiss Way **8.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill (4/4) **9.0** Booked (6/6) **9.30** Clare in the Community (3/6) **10.0** The Prisoner (4/4) **11.0** Who Killed Zebedee? (1/2) **11.30** The Wolf Far Hence (4/6) **12.0** In My Mind's Eye (4/5) **12.15** Dead Cert (4/5) **12.30** On the Rocks (1/4) **1.0** The Burkiss Way **1.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill (4/4) **2.0** Booked (6/6) **2.30** Clare in the Community (3/6) **3.0** The Prisoner (4/4) **4.0** Who Killed Zebedee? (1/2) **4.30** The Wolf Far Hence (4/6) **5.0** In My Mind's Eye (4/5) **5.15** Dead Cert (4/5) **5.30** On the Rocks (1/4) **6.0** The Burkiss Way **6.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill (4/4) **7.0** Booked (6/6) **7.30** Clare in the Community (3/6) **8.0** Writing: The Midlands (3/3) **9.0** Great Lives (1/9) **9.30** Ruth Rendell Stories (4/5) **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (14/15) **10.0** Comedy Club: It's a Fair Cop (3/4) **10.30** Tom Wrigglesworth's Hang-Ups (2/4) **11.0** Ida Barr: Artificial Hip Hop (2/4) **11.15** Political Animals (1/4) **11.30** Rigor Mortis (3/6) **12.0** The Prisoner (4/4) **1.0** Who Killed Zebedee? (1/2) **1.30** The Wolf Far Hence (4/6) **2.0** In My Mind's Eye (4/5) **2.15** Dead Cert (4/5) **2.30** On the Rocks (1/4) **3.0** The Burkiss Way **3.30** Thank You, Mrs Fothergill (4/4) **4.0** Booked (6/6) **4.30** Clare in the Community (3/6) **5.0** Shy Baby **5.45** Short Works

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch

R	T	C	Y	C	O	V	E	R
E	D	E	U	K	Q	L	A	A
P	D	U	K	S	G	S	A	D
P	O	C	V	N	H	R	N	I
O	U	A	I	E	A	I	E	V
T	B	S	E	R	T	L	O	A
Y	L	T	L	I	U	Q	B	N
D	E	S	P	R	I	N	G	S
D	A	E	N	W	O	R	H	T
E	I	T	H	G	I	N	S	E
T	C	P	I	L	L	O	W	R

Solution no 16,551

■	I	N	O	F	F	E	N	S	I	V	E	■
T	■	A	■	R	■	I	■	W	■	I	■	H
I	V	Y	L	E	A	G	U	E	■	C	O	E
G	■	■	■	C	■	H	■	L	■	E	■	A
H	O	I	C	K	■	T	E	L	A	V	I	V
T	■	N	■	L	■	Y	■	■	■	E	■	E
L	I	S	T	E	N	■	S	K	I	R	U	N
I	■	P	■	■	■	S	■	E	■	S	■	K
P	R	E	E	M	P	T	■	T	W	A	I	N
P	■	C	■	E	■	E	■	C	■	■	■	O
E	A	T	■	D	E	A	T	H	B	L	O	W
D	■	O	■	I	■	M	■	U	■	E	■	S
■	G	R	E	A	S	Y	S	P	O	O	N	■

Sudoku no 6,073

4	6	5	9	3	8	2	7	1
7	8	1	4	2	5	9	6	3
9	2	3	1	7	6	8	5	4
1	9	4	8	5	7	3	2	6
3	5	2	6	1	4	7	9	8
6	7	8	3	9	2	1	4	5
5	4	9	2	8	1	6	3	7
2	1	6	7	4	3	5	8	9
8	3	7	5	6	9	4	1	2

Word wheel
AUTOCRACY

Suguru

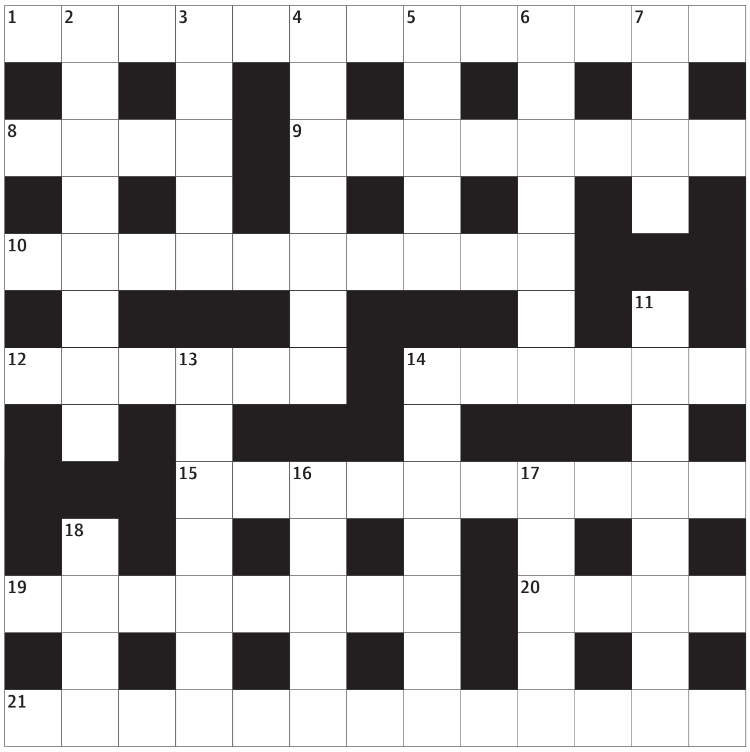
4	2	3	1	4	5
3	1	4	2	3	1
4	2	3	5	4	2
1	5	4	2	1	3
4	3	1	3	5	2
1	2	5	2	1	3

Want more? Get access to more than 4,000 puzzles at **theguardian.com/crossword**. To buy puzzle books, visit **guardianbookshop.com** or call **0330 333 6846***

Quick crossword no 16,552

Across
1 That's where it is! (1,5,3,4)
8 Break suddenly (4)
9 Criticise (8)
10 Filming (10)
12 Pry (6)
14 Imposing entrance (6)
15 Clothing worn by soldiers as protection from flying shrapnel etc (4,6)
19 Habituate (8)
20 Foul (4)
21 Closeness (13)

Down
2 Cannibal (8)
3 Monetary unit of Nepal and Sri Lanka (5)
4 Family moniker (7)
5 Thick-skinned herbivorous animal of tropical Africa (abbr) (5)
6 Game that starts with 22 balls (7)
7 Cone (anag) (4)
11 Downfall for Napoleon (8)
13 Fail to pay what's due (7)
14 Nightwear (7)
16 Behave improperly (3,2)
17 Cat-like animal that secretes musk (5)
18 Cure (anag) (4)



Stuck? For help call 0906 200 83 83. Calls cost £1.10 per minute, plus your phone company's access charge. Service supplied by ATS. Call 0330 333 6946 for customer service (charged at standard rate). To buy puzzle books, visit guardianbookshop.com or call 0330 333 6846.

Sudoku no 6,074

Hard. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

		3						
				7			1	4
5					8		2	
					9	7		
	4			3				9
		9	1				6	3
			3					7
	3	2			6			
	8			5	7	2		

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

	4				3
		3			2
	2			3	4
	3				5

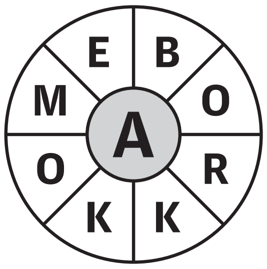
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 nonsense words in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

H	O	O	E	Y	W	Y	L	S
T	O	R	D	A	P	E	C	W
R	V	T	F	S	V	N	R	T
I	Y	F	A	I	G	O	O	M
P	L	E	R	I	A	L	C	U
E	S	D	N	T	R	A	K	K
C	D	A	S	R	B	B	T	N
E	L	E	N	N	A	L	F	U
B	I	L	G	E	G	L	D	B
M	U	K	O	H	E	I	B	A
E	R	U	B	B	I	S	H	N

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-32. Good-26. Average-19.



Trivia corner

Who is the oldest person to win an Emmy?
a. David Attenborough
b. Betty White
c. Norman Lear
d. Carl Reiner
Answer top right



TODAY'S TRIVIA CORNER ANSWER **NORMAN LEAR**